

IRISES

The Bulletin of the American Iris Society



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Triennial

Single: \$60.00 / Dual: \$75.00

Life

Single: \$450.00 / Dual: \$545.00

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15% discount. (For Dual Senior Life, both members must be 65 or older.) 15% Senior Discount applies only to Life Membership.

YOUTH RATES (UNDER AGE 19)

Youth, without *Bulletin*: \$5.00

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OVERSEAS RATES

Annual

Single: \$30.00 / Dual: \$35.00

Triennial

Single: \$65.00/ Dual: \$80.00

May be paid by check, VISA, or Mastercard. Overseas memberships include bulk air mail to country of destination followed by first class postage within the country, and is payable in U.S. currency.

The American Iris Society is a nonprofit institution incorporated February 2, 1927, in the County of Philadelphia, State of Pennsylvania. By the terms of the Charter, the Corporation has no stockholders and exists for the sole purpose of promoting the culture and improvement of the Iris.

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On the Front Cover

A bouquet of spurias at Huntington
Botanical Garden.

Photo: Andi Rivarola



The illuminating hafts of ‘Daughter of Stars’ (Spoon, 2001).

Photo: Brock Heilman

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One of the benefits of being President of The American Iris Society is having the “loan” of bound copies of early AIS Bulletins beginning with the first one published in June 1920. Reading through these bulletins is not only a history lesson, but also gives me a better appreciation of our heritage. I'd like to share with you a few things I've learned and hope you enjoy this trip back in time.

The first bulletin (although it was not named the *Bulletin* until the third issue published a year later) contained a scant 30 pages, focusing on articles discussing the culture of irises in various parts of the country, written by irisarians from California to Maine and a few places in between. It also lists the names of the approximately 450 charter members – a charter member being defined as one who paid their dues by June 1 of that year. The list included such familiar names as John T. Wister, W.R. Dykes, Jacob Sass, Bertrand Farr, Frank Presby, and Sidney B. Mitchell.

The theme of the second issue, published in January 1921, was “Garden Irises, Past and Present,” which included a fascinating article about the development of the tall bearded iris in the 19th century, written by Ernest H. Krelage (a name not familiar to me) of Holland. In his article he refers to the irises of the day as “flag irises” and goes on to say that the oldest named seedling varieties were available in the first part of the 19th century. He then points out that raising irises from seed is much older—the earliest record of seedling bearded irises dates from 1601.

As you prepare to vote the 2012 Tall Bearded Iris Symposium ballot, you'll find it interesting that the first symposium was introduced to irisarians in 1921 as an “informal” symposium, with the comment that “the results would prove to be of assistance not only to the prospective purchaser, but to the nurseryman who must always consider for what varieties there will be a demand.” The results of this first symposium were deemed to be inadequate as very few members participated.

The first Check List was published in January 1922 in conjunction with the second symposium. This time, however, the vote was not open to all irisarians. Instead a jury consisting of 23 “iris enthusiasts” was selected to vote the ballot under the theory that the general membership was not yet fully prepared to make a complete rating of the entire checklist. The jurors were instructed to use a point scoring method ranging

from 5 (fair, but surpassed by similar varieties) to 9.8 (the nearest perfection among existing irises). At the time it was felt that an iris not meriting at least a 5 was “poor and practically worthless”. No iris could be rated a 10 because “the recent work of breeders forecasts far superior development than known at present so no variety should be given ten.” The composite score for each iris was then averaged and the results published in the May 22, 1922 issue.

We have come a long way from that day.

The cost of the first issue was \$1.00 for members and \$3.00 for non-members. Subsequent issues in those early years were priced at \$0.50 for members and \$1.00 for non-members. It is not clear whether membership dues in those days covered the cost of the bulletin or whether members actually had to pay an extra charge for their copy.

By January 1924 (Bulletin #10) the number of pages had increased to 60 and pictures and line drawings began to appear. Membership had increased to 750 and the first mention of dues (\$3.00) was published. Local societies sprang to life, as evidenced by a notice that the Sass brothers had just formed a garden club in Omaha, Nebraska. The first iris shows had been held and an awards policy was established. The iris score card used for judging was much different than our current scale of points, and included points for fragrance and value for exhibition or as a cut flower.

With our 100th anniversary less than eight years away, the story of our history and highlights through the current day will be the focal point of a Centennial Celebration publication. We are looking for people to help in this endeavor and in the planning of other events during the centennial year. If you'd like to help, contact Jody Nolin, publications chair, or Bob Pries, public relations and marketing chair. Contact information for both is in the directory on page 56.

On one last note, if you have expertise in developing websites and are interested in assisting with the AIS website, please contact me or webmaster John Jones by phone or email.

I wish all of you a wonderful bloom season. ❀



What's Left?

Each April, the pages of this magazine burgeon with ads from gardens around the country featuring the latest innovations and introductions from hybridizers around the world. If we ranked them, the April issue would probably always win first place in a popularity contest. Not only does it brim with tantalizing ads, this issue features some tantalizing content too. In a month focused on what's new in the world of irises, it seems prudent to lean on content that reflects how those new varieties come to life. Award-winning hybridizer Keith Keppel introduces us to the world of luminatas and shares seedlings from his garden; a feature by Australian Louisiana iris breeder Heather Pryor showcases her latest orange and plicata breakthroughs; and retired scientist Dan Meckenstock shares insights from his backyard studies of genetic domains in iris flowers..

In his landmark 1930 tome *Plant Hunting on the Edge of the World*, British plant explorer Frank Kingdon-Ward famously wrote "We may well wonder whether there can be any new plant left to be introduced, so great is the variety we possess, and so far afield have collectors searched." His well-intended, though arrogant and prideful suggestion that humanity had any vague understanding of the world's plant diversity speaks dimly of a man who by any other accounts was one of the greatest plant collectors of the 20th century. But it's not all Frank's fault. After all, the overriding view at the time was just as he asserted—we knew the world as it existed and grew gardens full of all that we knew. What more could really be discovered?

Bearded iris breeders in the early 20th century were a little downcast though hardly as arrogant, struggling more or less with the limitations of diploid species until

the introduction of new tetraploid germplasm from the Middle East. If anyone suggested that the limits of bearded iris hybridizing were in sight, I'm sure Barry Blyth or Paul Black might have something to say about that. The beardless realms also hold vast treasures—the secrets lurking beneath the caramel-colored flowers of the latest Schafer-Sacks Siberian introduction or the prospects of pinkish tints in Dave Niswonger's spurias. Though we possess great variety in our collections, the future twinkles with the possibilities of even more.

Woody plant expert Michael Dirr once told a friend of mine "In plant breeding, good is the enemy of great." Truer words have never been said. Plant breeders—the artist-scientist hybrids of horticulture—should never settle for mediocrity. What's left for irises? If you support the hybridizers who take the measured route to excellence—test and trial their varieties, and patiently cultivate beauty one bud, ruffle, and branch at a time—you'll quickly find the answer. Underwhelming, underperforming irises don't deserve garden space, much less a name. As a consumer your buying power has tremendous influence on the status quo. We'll all benefit from better-looking, better-growing irises in our gardens, and remember, there shouldn't be any hard feelings talking candidly about plants. They can't talk back, after all, and they don't read the same magazines we do. ♣



Connect with us!



Join the AIS crowd on Facebook!



editor@irises.org



Visit our website www.irises.org



Don't forget the blog!
<http://theamericanirissociety.blogspot.com/>

AIS Insurance

BY MICHELLE SNYDER, INSURANCE CHAIR

Below are instructions for obtaining Certificates of Insurance when required by the venue where an event is being held. Please be aware I DO NOT obtain the certificates of insurance for the local clubs, etc. It is the responsibility of the club, etc. hosting the event to obtain the necessary Certificate of Insurance.

To obtain a Certificate of Insurance go the www.irises.org. Click on the Member Services link and then click on AIS Insurance and you will be taken to the page that has the instructions for obtaining the necessary Certificate. The form can either be downloaded and faxed to the number shown or it can be completed electronically and sent via email.

There is a statement that says "Is Certificate Holder requested to be named as an additional insured?" If you only need to show proof of insurance, circle No. If the venue needs to be named as an additional insured, circle Yes.

As always, if there are any problems associated with obtaining the needed Certificate, or if you have any questions in general regarding insurance, please contact me at either 928-282-5867, or my email address of sammygiz@aol.com. ♣

AIS has a New Librarian

BY TRACY PLOTNER, OREGON

Due to health issues, I am giving up my duties as AIS Librarian. Please direct all future mailings to the new librarian:

Dave Silverberg
32009 S Ona Way
Molalla, OR 97038-0250
Email: sil1812@molalla.net

Please extend Dave the courtesy you have shown me in the last six years. I have every confidence in him and his abilities to carry on the functions of the library. ♣

A New Way to Order Digital Programs from AIS!

BY JANET SMITH, CALIFORNIA

As the AIS embraces the digital age, you can now opt to receive many of the digital programs via email. For a nominal fee of \$8, paid by check or credit card (please provide a phone number so I can contact you for your credit card information), an affiliate can have select digital programs that much faster without having to wait on them in the mail. This offer applies to only those programs currently on CDs, as the DVD programs are far too large to send via the Internet. ♣



Come On In!

AIS Silent Auction

Something for everyone!

April 17 - April 19

Ontario California



The American Iris Society 2012 Photo Contest

The AIS invites you to participate in our annual photo contest. This contest is free and open to everyone, with the exception of contest judges and the contest chairperson who are not eligible to enter. The winning photo of each category will be published in the January issue of *Irises* and on the AIS web site. Prior year's winners and honorable mentions can be viewed on the AIS web site at www.irises.org.

The 2012 winner of each category will receive a 2012 introduction. The winner of each category will also receive a single annual membership or annual membership extension to AIS. Winners who are AIS life members will receive an annual membership in an AIS Section of their choice. Runners-up of each category will receive a 2010 or 2011 introduction.

HOW TO ENTER:

Fill out the entry form designating in which category you are entering your digital photos. Then e-mail or send a CD of your digital (jpeg) high resolution photos to the AIS Photo Contest Chair, at the address indicated. You may submit up to five (5) total photos for this contest. The deadline for submissions to this Photo Contest is June 30, 2012. **(Any photo submitted that was a winner in a previous year will automatically be disqualified because the judges look for originality.)**

Irises in photos should be of the genus *Iris*. **The entry photo and title must match the category it is in.** Entries will be selected and judged in six (6) categories:

1. Irises used in a landscaped or home garden.
2. Irises in a field or tour garden.
3. Person or people (at an iris location or event).
4. Close up of an iris or irises.
5. Iris photos - art effects, macro of bloom segments.
6. Photos of pets, wildlife or garden art with the irises.

***Any photos taken by a youth photographer (under 19) in any of the six (6) categories will be judged separately from the adult entrants.

"High Resolution" digital photos would preferably be 300 dpi or higher at 100% the photo's native size. Please do not send a print of your digital photo. If you only have prints, please do not send anything smaller than 4x6 or larger than 5x7. We ask that your print submission be on photo paper. **The digital photos should be sent as a high resolution jpeg file.** Make sure you identify the variety or person in each photo on the entry form and photo file name. Please provide AIS with a self-addressed stamped envelope if you want the prints returned. Otherwise, prints will not be returned and may be destroyed when not selected.

A panel of three AIS Members will judge the photos received and their decisions will be final.

WHERE TO SEND YOUR PHOTOS AND ENTRY PRINTS, CDS, AND ENTRY FORM:

The American Iris Society Photo Contest
c/o Janet Smith, P O Box 1585, Coarsegold, CA 93614-1585

DIGITAL:

Email jpegs & entry form to: AISPhotoContest@irises.org

ENTRY FORM:

Please designate Category #, photo caption name and name of persons in photos, if any, to match name on file or photo.

#1 _____

#2 _____

#3 _____

#4 _____

#5 _____

***If this is a **youth** entry, please tell us your age: _____

I am the person who took the photograph(s) enclosed, and I have not assigned any of my rights associated with these photographs to any third party. By entering the photo contest I am hereby authorizing The American Iris Society a royalty free, non-exclusive right to use winning photograph(s) and photograph(s) worthy of honorable mention in publications, in brochures, and calendars, on the Internet, and for other promotional uses. (Forms submitted by email do not require actual signature. By filling in the information in this form including the information below, either fully or partially, and submitting the form by email, you grant the American Iris Society the rights specified in the paragraph above).

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

(Receipt of photos will be acknowledged by email. Please provide a SASE if you want a receipt by mail.)

Send inquiries to AISPhotoContest@irises.org

This form may be completed on-line, saved, and printed. If emailing jpgs, also attach your completed form with your entry. ♣

Request For Guest Beardless Iris “Iris In Wonderland – 2015” 2015 AIS Convention in Portland, Oregon

The Greater Portland Iris Society will host The American Iris Society National Convention in May 2015.

Convention attendees will tour six well-known gardens of the Pacific Northwest. Master plantings will be established in three or more host gardens. Hybridizers of beardless varieties are invited to send rhizomes of recent introductions and seedlings under consideration for introduction.

Please observe the following guidelines when sending guest irises as only officially submitted guest irises will appear in the convention booklet.

Up to five rhizomes of each variety will be accepted from September 1 through September 15, 2012. Please ship plants to:

Chad Harris

US Mail: PO Box 346; Washougal, WA 98671-0346

UPS/FedEx: 12 Marble Road; Washougal, WA 98671-7912

Contacts:

Chad Harris: chadharris@prodigy.net

John Ludi: kludi@juno.com

The name of the variety or seedling number should be clearly marked on each rhizome. In addition, the following information should accompany each variety on a separate packing list:

- Hybridizer's name and address
- Name or seedling number of the variety

- Type of iris (Siberian, Species, Spec-X, etc)
- Height, color, distinguishing features
- Year of introduction (if applicable)

The packing list should include the contributor's email address to receive an electronic receipt. Absent an email address, a receipt will be mailed to all contributors.

If a guest seedling is later named, it will be the responsibility of the hybridizer to notify the Guest Iris Chair of change. Updates should include name and corresponding seedling number.

Shortly before the convention, contributors will be asked for instructions regarding disposition of the plants. Failure to reply by April 1, 2015 will be interpreted as permission to destroy all seedlings, and distributed named varieties, one to each host garden and the rest as determined by the Convention Committee. *No rhizomes will be offered for sale on the internet or other means which compete with sales by the contributors.* Guest iris returned will be sent freight paid, except for foreign addresses.

The Convention Committee and the owners of the host gardens will strictly adhere to the Code of Ethics as printed in the AIS Convention Handbook.

The Convention Committee and host gardens will not be responsible for losses beyond their control. ♣

2011 Australasian Dykes Medal

Congratulations to Graeme Grosvenor for winning the 2011 Australasian Dykes Medal for 'Imogen Paige' (2008), named for his granddaughter.

This is his 15th Dykes Medal.



Request For Bearded and Beardless Iris

AIS Convention: Dallas 2014

The Iris Society of Dallas, Dallas, Texas will host the American Iris Society Convention in April of 2014. Hybridizers are invited to send guest rhizomes of recent introductions and seedlings of bearded irises under consideration for introduction. Please observe the following guidelines when sending guest irises.

1. Up to four rhizomes of each variety will be accepted.
2. The guest irises will be accepted from August 15 through September 15, 2012.
3. Bearded Guest irises shipped by United States Postal Service (USPS), or by United Parcel Service (UPS) to: Hooker Nichols 3365 Northaven Road Dallas, Texas 75229
4. The name of the variety, or seedling number, should be clearly marked on each rhizome. In addition, the following information should accompany each plant on a separate packing list:
 - a. Hybridizer's name and address
 - b. Name or seedling number of the variety
 - c. Type of iris (TB, BB, IB, AB, SDB, etc.)
 - d. Height, color, and bloom season (EML)
 - e. Year of introduction (if introduced)
5. If a guest seedling is named, it will be the responsibility of the hybridizer to notify the Guest Iris Chairperson no later than December 1, 2013.
6. A receipt will be mailed to all contributors. Shortly before the convention contributors will be asked for instructions regarding the distribution of the plants. Failure to reply by June 15, 2014 will be interpreted as permission to destroy all seedlings and distribute named varieties, one to the garden owner and the rest to the Iris Society of Dallas plant sale. All official guest plants will be returned freight paid, except for foreign addresses.
7. The Convention Committee and the owners of tour gardens will strictly adhere to the Code of Ethics as printed in the AIS Convention Handbook.
8. The Guest Iris Committee will not be responsible for losses beyond its control, and only irises received through the Guest Iris Chairperson will be listed in the Convention Booklet. ♣

How-to Win the AIS Photo Contest in 2012!

BY JANET SMITH

As spring approaches, dust off your camera, snap a few shots, and enter the AIS Photo Contest. Here are a few pointers that can make a difference if your photo is considered for competition:

- 1) Make sure the photo is in focus.
- 2) Digital format is preferred. Print files are still accepted, though no smaller than 4 inches x 5 inches and not larger than 5 inches x 6 inches.
- 3) Make sure your digital photo is at 300 dpi resolution. When in doubt, check your camera settings as many digital cameras have factory defaults set at low resolution (e.g. 96 or 144 dpi).
- 4) Be sure your photo matches the category you are placing it in.
- 5) If you are filling out your photo contest form online, save it for your records before sending it in the event of a transmission error.
- 6) Do create a file name with a title or listing the name of the iris, if known.
- 7) Be sure the photo file name matches the name listed on the photo contest form.
- 8) Do not send a photo with just numbers as the file name.

Remember when in doubt, ask! Email aisphotocontest@irises.org with any questions. ♣

Conventions

2012: April 16-21 Ontario, California

Co-Chairs:

Kathy Chilton: 14333 S. Stagecoach Rd.; Tucson, AZ 85736; (520)591-1729; <ranchiris@aol.com>

Jill Bonino: 3110 Kirkham Drive; Glendale, CA 91206; (818)790-3256; <aistreas@earthlink.net>

Headquarters: Doubletree Hotel Ontario

222 North Vineyard Avenue; Ontario, CA 91764; (909)937-0900

2013: April 15-April 20 Dallas, Texas

Chair: Bonnie Nichols

3365 Northaven Road; Dallas, TX 75229; (214) 352-2191; <bjnhtn@aol.com>

Headquarters: Crowne Plaza Dallas (Near the Galleria)

14315 Midway Road; Addison, TX 75001; (972)980-8877

2014: April 21-April 26 Dallas, Texas

See above

2015: May 25 - 30

Portland, Oregon

Chair: John Ludi

35071 SE Hwy 211; Boring, OR 97009; (503) 668-9230; <kludi@juno.com>

Headquarters: Red Lion Hotel on the River (Jantzen Beach, Oregon)

909 N. Hayden Island Drive; Portland, OR 97217; (503) 283-4466; www.Redlion.com/jantzenbeach

Fall Board Meetings

2011: Nov 4 - 6: Atlanta, GA

Chair: Carolyn Hawkins

7329 Kendel Court; Jonesboro, GA 30236-2512; (770)855-4248; <carolyn9999@comcast.net>

Headquarters: Embassy Suites, Atlanta Airport

4700 Southport Road; Atlanta, GA 30337; (404)767-1988

2012, Nov 2 - 4: Columbus, OH

Chair: Jody Nolin

5184 County Road 20; Rushsylvania, OH 43347; (614)507-0332; <jody.nolin@gmail.com>

Headquarters: Holiday Inn

7007 N. High Street; Worthington, OH 43085; (614) 436-0700

2013 Nov. 1 - 2: New Orleans, LA

Headquarters: Doubletree New Orleans Airport Hotel

2150 Veterans Memorial Blvd.; Kenner, LA 70062; (504) 467-3111

Chair: Paul W. Gossett

1502 S. Boulder Ave #12B; Tulsa, OK 74119-4034; (918) 853-6204; <pwgossett@juno.com>



AIS Convention Programs

Median Iris Society

Topic: Sutton Medians

Presenter: George Sutton

Society For Siberian Irises

Topic: Current Events with Siberians

Presenter: Terry Aitken

Spuria Iris Society

Topic: Spuria Digital Presentation and Growing Spurias Q & A

Presenter: Jim Hedgecock and Andi Rivarola

Society For Japanese Irises

Topic: TBD

Presenter: TBD

Reblooming Iris Society

Topic: Progress in Rebloomers

Presenter: Riley Probst

Society For Pacific Coast Native Irises

Topic: Pacific Coast Irises from High Science to Your Garden

Presenter: Bob Sussman and Kathleen Sayce

SIGNA

Topic: A DNA Look at Iris Species Classification

Presenter: Dr. Carol Wilson

Dwarf Iris Society

Topic: TBD

Presenter: Bob Pries

HIPS

Topic: What!? The Sixties Again!

Presenter: Robert Karr

Aril Society International

Topic: An Overview of Arils and Arilbreds

Presenter: Lowell Baumunk

Society for Louisiana Irises

Topic: Louisiana Irises—Past and Future

Presenter: Paul W. Gossett

Tall Bearded Iris Society

Topic: The Search for The Perfect Iris

Presenter: Panel session,
Karen Bergamo, moderator

Social Media/Facebook Workshop

Topic: Effective Ways to Promote Your Iris Club

Presenter: Andi Rivarola

Social Media/Iris Encyclopedia Workshop

Topic: A Raison d'Être

Presenter: Robert Pries

Judges Training Sessions

Topic: Awards and Ballots (2 hours)

Presenter: Judy Keisling

Topic: Pacific Coast Natives

Presenter: Terry Aitken (1 hour)

Errata:

Many of you had a field day with several typos in the January issue. Here are the errors with their corrections and our apologies.

Due to a misinterpretation of the file name, there was a typo for one of the photo contest winners featured in the last issue. In Category 2, the winner was printed "Gypsy by Geena Kim Ung". As many of you noted, 'Gypsy Geena' is a 2003/04 Barry Blyth introduction and the photographer was Mr. Kim Ung.

In the spelling gaffes column, Robert Hollingworth's name appeared with an additional "s" in the table of contents on page 4. The "e's" managed to disappear from Graeme Grosvenor's name in President Keisling's message on page 6. Our sincere apologies to Mr. Grosvenor, and our thanks to Judy Nunn for bringing this to our attention. We also omitted an "r" from 'Montmartre' on page 27 in the photo caption. Thanks to Andi Rivarola for bringing this to our attention. Spell check is clearly of no help! ♣

Milestones

COMPILED AND WRITTEN BY JIM MORRIS, MISSOURI

200 YEARS AGO—CHARLES DICKENS

Considered by many as the greatest novelist of the nineteenth century, Charles Dickens (1812 – 1870) entered the world 200 years ago. As a journalist he started as a court reporter during the violent and cruel times of Victorian England. His stories, mainly written in serial format weekly and monthly about the squalor and corruption of London, were wildly anticipated by his audience. And such character names! Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Bob Cratchit, Fagin, Pip, Heap, Podsnap—all conjure up immediate visions even today to any English reader. The name Dickens is used in interjections like “What the Dickens” as a substitute for “devil” or “hell.” His weekly serial *A Tale of Two Cities*, as with all his serials, was later printed in book form with over 200 million copies sold. Today Dickens fans can download *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *David Copperfield* (1849) and *Oliver Twist* (1837-1839) for free on e-readers.

What irises were around 200 years ago? It was about the time E. H. Krelage & Son started in Haarlem, Holland (the firm lasted until 1919). I’m sure the HIPS folks could name some varieties other than ‘Flavescens’ (De Candolle 1813) and the common species irises of the time. The iris ‘Charles Dickens’ (Krelage, 1892) was superseded by ‘Atlas’ (Millet & Fils 1903) from the famous French growers of irises, peonies and violets.

FRESNO IRIS SOCIETY TURNS 45

2012 marks the 45th anniversary of Region 14’s Fresno Iris Society which began in the family home of Dr. John and Fran Weiler. John once said, “I loved irises so Fran and I decided to see if there were like-minded people in the Fresno area.” Well to their surprise there were quite a few and so in 1967 an affiliate of AIS was born. Although Dr. Weiler did not live to see it, having passed away in September 2011, he once thought it was a marvel earlier when it had reached its 40th. He was so proud that his love of irises had continued to “blossom.”

Dr. Weiler felt the following statement was the most important to remember: “Over the years, membership in the Fresno Iris Society has fluctuated considerably, but had been larger during periods of activity when more people were involved in planning, preparing for major functions, and day-to-day functions of the Society. This last statement, I think, is one of the most important points for members to note. The more deeply involved each person becomes, the greater the rewards of belonging to the Society, may you have many more and succeed in even greater accomplishments.”

We believe this message applies to all affiliates.

REGION 9—LOUISIANA IRIS JUDGES’ TRAINING ELDORADO, ILLINOIS

The Southern Illinois Iris Society will sponsor three hours of Louisiana iris in-garden judges’ training Saturday, May 26, 2012

in Eldorado, Illinois. The training will be presented by Jerry and Melody Wilhoit, members of several AIS sections as well as the Society for Louisiana Irises. For more information or to register, contact Steve Poole, 775 Kaid Road, Eldorado, IL, 62930, (618) 273-5992, gspool@orchidsofozark.com.

REGION 21 SPRING TOUR LINCOLN, NE

The Lincoln Iris Society will host the Region 21 Spring meeting in Lincoln, NE, on May 25-26, 2012. Six private gardens will be on the tour, in addition to the Sass Memorial Iris Gardens at Mahoney State Park. Judy Keisling, AIS president, will be the guest speaker and conduct in-garden judges’ training. Inquiries may be made to Gary White, convention chairman, at (402) 421-6394 or to in2iris@yahoo.com.

FLORA, NOW IN ENGLISH BOTANICAL REVISED RULES TAKE EFFECT IN 2012

The times continue to change. Effective January 1, 2012, the new International Code of Botanical Nomenclature went into effect. This change, arguably the most stunning since Linnaean taxonomy began in 1735, allows botanists the options of writing descriptive statements in English and of publishing papers electronically.

Since the time of Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus (Carl von Linné), Latin has been the lingua franca of botany, although “officially” just since 1908, according to Dr. James S. Miller,

Dean and vice president for science at the International Plant Science Center of the New York Botanical Garden. Many botanists believe this modernization was long overdue and will streamline the naming process as an acceptance that English has become the language of science. Dr. Miller, who has his PhD. from St. Louis University, Missouri, and who was formerly Curator of Economic Botany at Missouri Botanical Garden, stated in a January 22, 2012 op-ed in the *New York Times*, “At a time when deforestation, the spread of invasive species and climate change are putting as many as one-third of all plant species at risk of extinction in the next 50 years, we don’t have time for [old] traditions like these.”

Miller continued, “Perhaps even more significant, the code now recognizes publication in online academic journals as equally valid as print publication.” It is not expected to impact the registration authorities of the various plant societies sanctioned by the International Association for Plant Taxonomy. The impact will be on taxonomic botanists describing the thousands of species not yet discovered and/or correctly described.

REMEMBERING SALT-OF-THE-EARTH MEMBERS

Long-time member **Clyde F. Hahn** (1920-2011) of Region 18 passed away February 23, 2011 at his Desloge, MO, home. Hahn, 90, was a member of the Mineral Area Iris Society for over 50 years. He was a past president of the club as well as the South East Missouri Iris Society (SEMO). He and his wife Anna lived at the same



residence since their marriage 66 years previous. Their jam-packed garden was an iris guest garden for the St. Louis 1981 AIS Convention. He served as Region 18 treasurer from 1995-2000.

Clyde and Anna did some hybridizing with Clyde registering and introducing 19 in his name and seven jointly with his wife. These included one BB and four Siberians with the rest being TBs. A TB ‘Caramel and Honey’ (1989) won his only HM in 1993. ‘Desloge Flattery’ (2006) is appropriately named as a TB “flatty.” It has received belated attention and can be seen at the Missouri Botanical Garden during the 2012 Region 18 Spring Convention sponsored by the Kirkwood Iris Society.

Hahn served his country in the U.S. Marine Corps during WWII. He is survived by wife Anna E. (Mueller) Hahn; sons Mike and Dennis Hahn; daughter Jane Ripplinger; two brothers and two sisters; eight grandchildren; and ten great-grandchildren.

Arnold & Carol Koekkoek notified us of the sad news that their friend **Charles T. “Chuck” Claussen** (1921-2011) of Sioux Falls, SD, and Region 21 died November 13, 2011 after a brief bout with cancer.

Claussen, 90, was a longtime member of AIS and the Sioux Empire Iris Society. He joined AIS in 1973 and became a judge in 1978. At the time of his death, he was a Retired Master Judge of AIS. Claussen served as Youth Chairman for Region 21 in 1981-1983 and as RVP 1987-1989, the years leading up to the region’s 1990 AIS Convention “Prairie In Bloom.” Then he served as Judges’ Training Chairman in 1993-1998. He and his wife Signey were awarded the Region 21 Distinguished Service Award in 1994.

Chuck and Signey were married in 1943 while he was attending Augustana College for two years before entering the U.S. Navy in 1944. He served as a Hospital Corpsman until discharge in 1946. He farmed in the Harrisburg area until 1952 and then worked at the Sioux Falls Stockyards for several years before going back to finish his B.S. degree in Animal Husbandry in 1957 from South Dakota State College. Following his graduation he worked for John Morrell & Co. as a lamb buyer and later in cattle procurement. He worked there until retirement 26 years later. Since 1959 he and his family lived on 20 acres west of Sioux Falls where he had a small herd of sheep and a cow-calf operation of purebred Black Angus. He served as a 4-H leader or assistant for 30 years and helped annually at the South Dakota State Fair.

Claussen was a master gardener and past president of the South Dakota Horticultural Society. He received the John Robertson Memorial Award from that society in 1992 for outstanding contributions to horticulture in the state. His farm had remnants of an old wagon trail going through it so they named their place “Wagontrail Acres.” It became home to large numbers of irises, daylilies, peonies, roses and many other perennials. His garden was on regional and local tours many times over the years. He hybridized and introduced twelve irises, all TBs except for one BB. He received HMs for two TBs in 1987—‘Wagontrail Night’ (1983) and ‘Pistol’ (1983).

Chuck Claussen is survived by his wife, Signey, of Sioux Falls; son, Ron, of Sioux Falls; daughter, Sandi (Terry) Jaspers of Sisseton, SD; one brother; four granddaughters; and one great-grandson. ♣

Section Happenings

BY JIM MORRIS, SECTION & COOPERATING SOCIETY LIAISON, MISSOURI

The world is full of willing people; some willing to work, the rest willing to let them. Hopefully the officers of the various AIS groups fit the first part of this statement. They are all busy people and need all the help they can get from their respective memberships. If all or most members would do just a little it would help greatly to share the load your officers are trying to respond to. After all this is *your* society. Ultimately it is your interest that will make your society what it is or what it is to become.

Through my years in business and in avocational activities, there are some words of advice I have tried to follow and I will offer them up here. Believe in yourself, but learn to take criticism. Work outside the box. Know when to speak up. Collaborate. Don't procrastinate. Get over yourself. Keep learning. Form follows function. Find inspiration everywhere. Network. Trust your gut. Ask for help. Question everything. Make it sustainable. Make me care. Do your research. The problem contains the solution. Think about all the possibilities.

Tall Bearded Iris Society update from President Hugh Stout
The Tall Bearded Iris Society is most grateful to the AIS Board for accepting us as a cooperating society. We hope to be a strong partner in growing both our societies.

TBIS will be hosting the tall bearded program at the AIS Convention on Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at 11:00 a.m. Though the

program is still coming together, we hope to present a consumer's perspective of the newer irises on the market today. This will be a program by customers as opposed to hybridizers. We hope it will be eye opening for both!

Due to prior commitments, the TBIS Board and General Meetings will be held in conjunction with Region 14's Annual Meeting in Aptos, CA, April 27, 2012 at 7:00 and 8:00 p.m., respectively. We are so excited to join Region 14's meeting, hosted by the Monterey Bay Iris Society. There will be auctions and fabulous gardens, including garden judges' training in Joe Ghio's garden!

Once again, we look forward to a long and prosperous partnership with the AIS.

DWARF IRIS SOCIETY

New DIS Vice President Bob Pries will present the dwarf iris program at the AIS Convention on Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at

5:00 p.m. Last year's survey ballot of DIS membership regarding the future possibility of merging with MIS was split with 18 votes in favor and 19 against. The vote was so close that a lot more consideration will have to be given to the matter. Editor Dave Miller published his second *Newsletter* with coverage on the DIS display gardens from Rose Kinnard. Top 2011 dwarfs were 'Wise' (T. Johnson, 2001) and 'Gecko Echo' (Kasperek, 2007) in a very small sample of eight gardens.

MEDIAN IRIS SOCIETY

George Sutton will present the median iris program at the AIS Convention on Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at 1:00 p.m. on the subject of his hybridizing work with medians. In *The Medianite*, Carol Coleman reported the MIS display garden voting results from 30 gardens with the top irises as follows: 'Cranapple' (Aitken, 1995) 145 points, BB;

Historic Iris Preservation Society

The HIPS speaker at the AIS Convention on Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at 9:00 a.m. will be HIPS board member Robert KARR from Newport, WA. His presentation will be "What? The Sixties Again!" KARR is HIPS northwest director (Regions 13 and 14) and has had a commercial garden named Newport Naturals. Members are anxiously awaiting the next issue of ROOTS.

'Dividing Line' (Bunnell, 2004) 132 points, MTB; 'Starwoman' (Smith, 1998) 114 points, IB; 'Eye To Eye' (Keppel, 2009) 88 points, arilbred-median; and 'Eye Of The Tiger' (Black, 2008) 61 points, SDB. Fundraising remains a major focus as MIS was required to purchase a new supply of Cook-Douglas, Sass, Knowlton and Williamson-White medals for future awards. This is a large expenditure about every ten years as MIS provides the medals to AIS. The MIS Popularity Symposium for 2011 voted by 40 members was somewhat close to the display garden reports, but different and more comprehensive. The top SDB was 'Bluebeard's Ghost' (Black, 2006); IB 'Starwoman' (Smith, 1998); MTB 'Dividing Line' (Bunnell, 2005); BB 'Crow's Feet' (Black, 2006); and arilbred median 'Omar's Stitchery' (Boswell, 2000).

SPECIES IRIS GROUP OF NORTH AMERICA

The SIGNA speaker at the AIS Convention on Thursday, April 19, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. will be Dr. Carol A. Wilson, Research Scientist at the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, the location of the extra tour on Sunday, April 22, 2012 sponsored by SPCNI. Dr. Wilson has been the recipient of at least two grants from the AIS Foundation for genetic research of irises. She has been studying species

of Pacific Coast irises since her MS thesis at Portland State University in the mid-1980s. Her paper *The Taxonomic Relationships of Pacific Coast Iris* was printed in the SPCNI *Almanac* Fall 2011 and reprinted in the SIGNA *Newsletter* Winter 2011. Her website is www.rsabg.org/iris.

2011 was the 45th year of the SIGNA seed exchange and you should read James Waddick's article *Mighty Oaks from Acorns Grow* in the July 2011 issue of *Irises* on pages 28-31. SIGNA is looking forward to the Siberian/Species mini-convention "A Capital Idea," June 7-9, 2012 in Lansing/Kalamazoo, MI, sponsored by the Society for Siberian Irises (see below).

SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES

Hybridizer Terry Aitken will present the Siberian iris program at the AIS Convention on Wednesday, April 18, 2012. His presentation will be titled "Current Events with Siberians." SSI is gearing up for their mini-convention on Siberians and Species in June. There will be four gardens on tour: Ensata Gardens; Copeland's Garden; Hollingworth's Garden; and John and Jean Kaufmann's Garden, which houses the Tri-County Iris Society's TB irises, in addition to John's experimental herbicide plots. Every three years SSI conducts a Siberian popularity poll. In 2011, 35 responses yielded a four-way tie for

first: 'Magnum Bordeaux' (Bauer/Coble, 2000), 'Miss Apple' (Schafer/Sacks, 2009), 'Ruffles and Flourishes' (Hollingworth, 2002), and 'Swans in Flight' (Hollingworth, 2006).

SOCIETY FOR JAPANESE IRISES

Editor Debbie Hughes from Kansas has been doing a beautiful job with *The Review* in her first year on the job. Anner Whitehead has once again demonstrated her awesome research skills with her erudite treatment of *Thomas Hogg, Jr.: His Times and His Irises* in the Fall 2011 issue, pages 23-45.

ARIL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

Their convention program for the second year in a row will be presented by Lowell Baumunk of Iris Colorado. It is scheduled for Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at 12:00 p.m. He had not selected a title as we went to press, but we hope to hear a bit about his three-week trip to Turkey in January 2012.

SOCIETY FOR PACIFIC COAST NATIVE IRISES

See SIGNA above regarding our AIS Convention extra tour on Sunday, April 22, 2012. Our Pacific Coast Natives program is scheduled for Wednesday, April 18, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. on "PCIs from High Science to Your Garden." It will be presented by Bob Sussman and Kathleen Sayce. The fall 2011

In Memoriam

Mrs. C.W. Arny, Jr.
Betty Burch
C.T. Claussen
Maryann Coates

Clyde Hahn
Mary Ann Heacock
Stormy Anne Sandquist
Lillian Webber

Dr. John H. Weiler
Ilona Wooten

issue of the SPCNI *Almanac* has all the details of their 2011-2012 Seed Exchange administered for the first time by chairman Emma Elliot. The deadline for orders has passed so plan for next year! The fall 2011 issue also contains Kathleen Sayce's discussion of her posting of over 400 photos of PCIs to the AIS Iris Encyclopedia—wow!

SOCIETY FOR LOUISIANA IRISES

Harry has had a long fascination with hybridizing *Iris savannarum*, a native iris of Florida. His update in his president's message in the SLI Winter 2011 issue of the *Fleur de Lis* is equally fascinating to me. Also in this issue is Steve Poole's account *Irises on Ice* about collecting Louisiana irises in southern Illinois and his subsequent trials and tribulations in hybridizing for tough irises, and how they survived the big ice storm of January 2009 that caused widespread damage and power outages across Arkansas, Missouri, southern Illinois and western Kentucky. Schools were cancelled from January 26 through February 9. His tough little seedlings survived and thus his referral to them as "Irises on Ice." The article also appears in this issue of *Irises*.

SPURIA IRIS SOCIETY

SIS Vice President Andi Rivarola and SIS President Jim Hedgecock will present a digital program on growing spurias on Friday, April 20, 2012 at the AIS Convention. SIS also has a 2012 Spuria Iris Sale offering four recent introductions: 'Ross Island' (N. Price, R. 2010); 'Sellwood' (N. Price, R. 2010); 'Cheyenne Sun' (Hedgecock, R. 2011); and, 'Caribbean Blue' (Hedgecock, R. 2011). Choose any two spuria irises for \$35 or all four for \$70 (shipping included; U.S. only). To order, please send your check to: Spuria Iris Society, C/O Debbie Babuscio, 6634 Gaviota, Lake Balboa, CA 91406.

REBLOOMING IRIS SOCIETY

Southwestern Area Director Riley Probst will present "Progress in Rebloomers" at the AIS Convention on Saturday, April 21, 2012 at 4:30 p.m. RIS has the U.S. and Canada divided into five areas in order to provide regional reports of what rebloomers do where and when. The 2011 RIS Symposium poll was assembled and counted by Shirley Trio-Probst and the top TB was 'Daughter Of Stars' (D. Spoon, 2001). There were no votes for Siberians, Japanese and

Louisiana irises. The other section winners were: 'Aaah' (G. Sutton, 2009), MDB; 'Wizard's Return' (Tasco, 1999), SDB; tie 'Concertina' (G. Sutton, 2000) and 'Red Hot Chili' (M. Sutton, 2008), IBs; three way tie 'Emma Doodle' (Nearpass, 1999), 'New Encore' (G. Sutton, 2008), and 'Pretty Jazzy' (Probst, 2001), MTBs; 'Autumn Wine' (Christopherson 2003), BB; 'Walker Ross' (Ross/Chapman, 1998), AB; and 'Z Z Zanzibar' (Kasperek, 2005), SPEC-X.

Don Spoon has an excellent article *Hybridizing Basics for AIS Garden Judges and Youths of All Ages* in the Fall/Winter issue of *The Reblooming Iris Recorder* on pages 20-35. Reading this might improve your mind with its inclusion of somewhat humorous axioms and mother wit. Growing up he was often told, "Use of a dictionary (lexicon) will not cause irreparable brain damage." He continued, "Learning to use correctly 50 scientific terms could allow you to grasp the basic concepts needed to successfully hybridize irises." Some of the subtitles in this treatise are a hoot: Long Live Pollen; Flower Power; Lycopene Scene; Lotta Dotta; and X Files. My favorite paragraph is "Live Long and Prosper" wherein Don tells you (tongue in cheek I'm sure) how to make "\$10,000 per acre" with wise use of your land and your advertising and purchasing funds. It reminds me of how Kansan Helen Reynolds started her iris growing and hybridizing career in 1937 during the Depression after reading an article about how easy irises were to grow, with no diseases, and you could "double your money" in two years. Go for it! ♣

Future Mini-Conventions

SOCIETY FOR SIBERIAN IRISES/SIGNA

June 7-9, 2012; Lansing, MI

SOCIETY FOR LOUISIANA IRISES

April 19-21, 2013, Dallas, TX (immediately following the AIS Convention in Dallas, April 15-20, 2013)

SOCIETY FOR JAPANESE IRISES

July 2014; Victoria, BC, Canada

Youth Views

BY CHERYL DEATON, CALIFORNIA

Winners of the annual AIS Youth Coloring Contest have been decided and already received their prizes.

Contestants participated from seven different regions. The overall winner was Ceceila Rucker from Region 6. Ceceila was entered in the 16 year old and up category. Her winning entry is pictured here. Most Original winner was Sarah M. Green from Region 21. Sarah entered the 13 to 15 year old category and she also won first place in her age group. Winning the 6 years old and under category was Julia Strouse from Region 1. Nataleigh Liddy from Region 18 won in the 7 to 9 year old category (which had the biggest participation). Chelsea Curlee from Region 17 won in the 10 to 12 year old category.

By the time you receive this issue, judges will have selected the winners of the Clarke Cosgrove Memorial Award for Youth Achievement and the Ackerman Essay Contest. The winners will be announced at the Awards Banquet during the AIS National Convention in Ontario, California. The Ackerman Essay Contest is sponsored by the AIS Foundation every year. I will publish the winning essays in a future issue of *Iris*, and might even put a sentence or two from all of the entries in my column. It is always interesting to read the thoughts and opinions of our youth members.

As you may remember, Louisiana irises were donated to all the youth members by Ron and Sue Killingsworth of Plantation Point Nursery and Bud and Rusty McSparrin of Bois d'Arc Nursery last year. I am eager to hear from our youth members about how these irises bloom this spring. Here are a few comments from our youth members:

"Thank you so much for 'Prof. Marta Marie' from AIS. I also received 'Late Summer Sunshine' and 'Love is Pink' from Mr. & Mrs. Cadd of Healdsburg, California about a month ago. All new irises get along well with our old resident iris named 'Rock Star'." —Keven Hacker, Virginia

"Thank you for the iris." —Madeline and Julia Strouse, Maine

"Thank you for the iris and letter about caring for them." —Jerry Yu, North Carolina

"Thank you for the iris. We can't wait to see them bloom next spring. They will look gorgeous." —Sam and Jessi Hendrickson, Illinois

"I love my new Louisiana iris and planted it in the ground right away." —Makayla Felix, California

"Thank you so much for 'Colorific'! I made a special spot for it. The Carvers of Weatherford, Texas got me started, and I am having fun hybridizing. Thanks again!" —Kendall Lisle, Texas

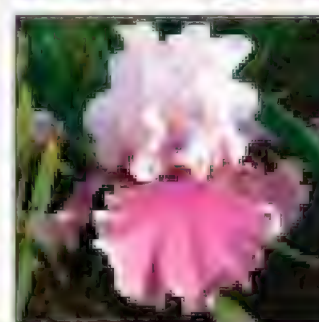
"Thank you!" —Hayley Waymire, Kansas (and from her grandmother... *"Thank you for sending Hayley the LA 'Sea Knight'. It sounds so pretty. We put it in a pot in the ground for the winter."*)

Looks like they are excited to see the bloom, just like we are. ♣

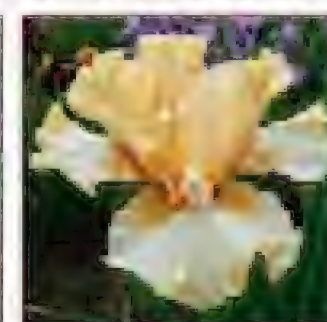
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The Iris Election?

BY TOM WATERS, NEW MEXICO

I've been involved in the AIS on and off since the 1970s and have been a judge for part of that time. A perennial conversation topic is the awards system. It begins when someone notes that an iris has won the Dykes Medal or the Award of Merit and yet performs poorly in their garden. No doubt this is sometimes attributable to plain bad luck. We've all lost plants that might have done fine in another spot or another year. But there are certainly cases where an iris receives high awards without being a consistent performer. How does this happen?

“Some are quick to blame the judges—

“They just vote for what they saw at the convention (or in a catalog, or on the show bench).”

“They just vote for irises from popular hybridizers.”

“They vote for the flower, and ignore the plant.”

Although I'm sure there are some judges who are guilty of these things from time to time, in my experience most judges really do assess a cultivar's garden performance before voting for it.

The system has a fundamental structural problem, which can create poor results even when all the judges do their best—awards are given to irises that receive the most votes, not to irises that receive the highest average rating from the judges who evaluate them. Or, to put it another way, the balloting does not distinguish between a non-vote that means “I don't know this iris” and one that means “I know this iris, and I don't think it's worthy.”

Here's a hypothetical example. Iris A is grown by 500 judges. 100 judges deem it award worthy; the

other 400 deem it unworthy (perhaps it fails to grow and bloom for them). Iris B is grown by 100 judges in various regions of the country, and those 100 judges all agree that the iris deserves an award. Both irises receive 100 votes, and are treated the same by the awards system. But it is obvious that iris B is superior (it does well for everyone who's tried it), whereas iris A is a poor performer in 80% of gardens!

The implication is clear: an iris can win an award even if most judges who see it deem it unworthy, simply by virtue of being seen by many, many judges.

We should not be treating garden awards like a presidential election. Most of us do not know all the candidates! A simple change could address this structural problem. Instead of having judges vote for a certain number of irises, have them rate any irises they have evaluated (on a scale of 0-5, for example). Then compile the average rating for each iris. Judges who have not evaluated an iris would then have no influence on its rating, unlike the present system, where not seeing an iris is effectively a vote against it.

This suggestion is just a starting point. One can think of tweaks and alternatives: requiring a minimum number of ratings, or requiring an iris have a good rating in different climate regions. Regardless of the particulars, I think this fundamental structural problem must be addressed if awards are to reliably reflect performance. We must stop treating unfamiliarity and disapproval as if they are the same thing. The former is information about a cultivar's distribution; the latter is information about its quality. An iris should not be able to compensate for shortcomings in quality by being widely distributed, but this is precisely how the present system works.

The views expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the staff of Irises or The American Iris Society. Please respect the right of contributors to articulate their opinions in a meaningful way. Rebuttals are surely encouraged! ♣



In Your Backyard

What's happening in your garden? A reader-driven feature in *Iris*es!
Submit your stories and photos to the editor for future inclusion in this segment!

Riley Probst, California

Sockin' It

The White Sox have arrived, but this isn't Chicago! No, this is the Fleur De Lis Garden in Modesto, CA late in the afternoon of December 3, 2011. We had just had reblooming garden judges' training here in the garden on December 1. The forecast lows for the next three nights were 34, 33 and 34 degrees. Unfortunately, the actual lows came in at 29, 29 and 28 degrees. Up until this date, Modesto's official low for the season had been 36 degrees. Our garden is located on the northeast edge of town and temperatures run about two degrees lower than in the city. Two blocks east of us is farm country.

The socks treatment for rebloomers works well if you have one or two nights at 32 or slightly below. Then occasionally the weather will warm back up for a week or two. This method allows you to extend the rebloom season for another week or two. Unfortunately for us this year, the socks did not work. Starting on December 4, we had 49 consecutive nights with low's in the 20s or 30s. Modesto's average low for this time of year is 41 degrees. This season's cold spell included 27 nights of 32 degrees or below. The lowest was 23 degrees on January 17th. Being an optimist, I

now have the socks folded and packed away in the attic of the barn until next fall, which hopefully will be milder.

As of early December 2011, we had 72 different varieties of rebloomers in bloom including TBs, BBs, IBs, MTBs and SDBs), many with multiple stalks. Betty Wilkerson's TB 'Echo Location' (2007) was our leader in days of rebloom this year with 149 days between July 3 and December 3. Rounding out our top eight this year, all with over 100 days of rebloom were:

2nd: 'Over and Over' (Innerst, 2001), TB 128 days

3rd: 'Low Ho Silver' (Byers, 1989), IB 124 days

4th: 'Autumn Tryst' (Weiler, 1993), TB 115 days

5th: 'Immortality' (Zurbrigg, 1982), TB 110 days

6th: 'Anxious' (Hager, 1992), TB 108 days

6th: 'Angelic Wings' (Miller, 1991), TB 108 days

8th: 'October' (Byers, 1989), TB 105 days

Our top BB rebloomer was 'Autumn Wine' (Christopherson, 2003) at 73 days. Our top MTB rebloomer was 'Plum Quirky' (Probst, 2005) at 57 days. Our top SDB rebloomer was 'Sugar Maple' (G. Sutton, 2003) with 72 days. ♣



Clockwise from top left:

Garden ready for a cold snap

'Echo Location' (Wilkerson, 2007)

'Plum Quirky' (Probst, 2005)

'Autumn Wine'
(Christopherson, 2003)

Mitch Jameson, Missouri

Dear Verna

I was standing in a certain spot in my backyard last fall with one of my best garden friends—Verna Jennings. I had in my hands several Keppel catalogs and Volume 92, Issue 3 of *Irises* that I used as evidence as to why I was so excited by that particular garden spot, which I can look out and see from my kitchen window. Verna suggested I write down this little story, so I did as a letter to her.

11/22/11

Dear Verna,

The garden work is about done for the year, and what a wonderful year it was with so many interesting folks and flowers at our spring convention, good rebloom, and many fine pulmonarias now rounding out the autumn. On my winter to-do list is to give you some of my iris hybridizing history as it relates to what is now happening in my backyard. Here goes.

I began importing iris from fancy places around 1980. My favorite places then were Melrose, Mission Bell, Bay View, Keppel, Schreiners and the oh-so-fine Monty Byers. By 1984, I concluded that I would try my hand at hybridizing and make a dashing orange bicolor. I took pollen from ‘Son of Star’ (Plough, 1969) and put it on Cabaret Royale (Blyth, 1976/1977). As I did so, I thought about Orwell’s “Big Brother” and his possible presence—“Big Bro, if you’re watching, watch this!” I got one pod that year. I germinated the seeds and talked my social worker friend Janet Peters into providing a home for the half dozen seedlings out her back door. Come spring of 1986, the best of the seedlings bloomed, though certainly not any orange bicolours. In 1986, Ben Hager introduced ‘Edith Wolford’, the first iris I ever paid introductory price for. It wore my high

school colors. I remember 1987 as a generally miserable year, as late freezes seriously reduced what few blooms there were to nothing. But ‘Edith Wolford’ produced a 24-inch stalk with four open flowers, and if “Big Bro” was watching then, he saw me messing with all four flowers—and by some divine luck, all made pods. From one pod came seedling 22-87 (Edith Wolford X 1-84, a flashy bright yellow and purple that still lives on the fine museum grounds of my hometown King City, Missouri). From another of the pods came my first registration and introduction ‘Doo Dah’ (1992), from the cross of ‘Edith Wolford’ by the great Melba Hamblen’s ‘Song of Spring’ (1983). Oh doo dah day! ‘Doo Dah’ never did as well as it did in 1990 when Perry Dyer and several iris friends took the St. Joseph, Missouri exit off Interstate 29 after attending the Hager-dominated, vase-loaded spuria, AIS National Convention in Omaha, Nebraska. Perry liked ‘Doo Dah’ and made it his “Pick of the Litter” that year in Contemporary Views, a decision he would later regret because let’s face it, ‘Doo Dah’ didn’t do ‘dat’ well in other gardens nor repeat its 1990 performance even here. But on the best stalk in 1990, there was a tag labeled 22-87 that formed a pod. The plot thickens again.

Too many seeds germinated too well the following spring. There were around 500 seedlings, 300 of them the result of an effort to intensify the color of my second introduction ‘Lion’s Share’ (1992). Most of the rest were children of ‘Doo Dah’. My home place was over planted already, so along with Bev Hoyt, John Swiastyn and I talked his mother Lydia Safan-Swiastyn into growing the bulk of the seedlings. She was as elated as she could be in several languages. She was an Ellis Island immigrant to America



‘Lydia Safan-Swiastyn’ (Jameson, 2000)

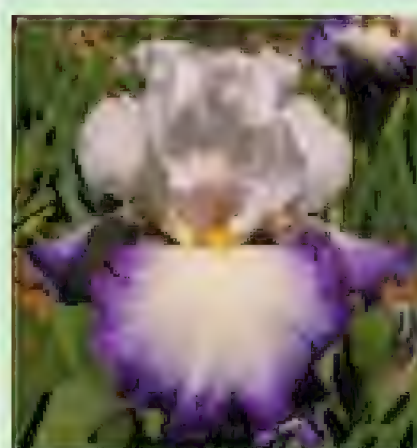
‘Son of Star’ (Palmer, 1969)

and her exciting personal history of growing up in eastern Europe, living through the Stalin era, and World War II would make for volumes of fascinating reading. Eventually she found her way to a plot of rich soil in south St. Joseph with her second husband Rodney Vermillion. Rodney loved to run a tiller and was great with garden tools. Lydia had green fingers and thumbs and grew and cooked to perfection whatever vegetable she wanted. But she loved flowers too.

We made elevated beds and planted the seedlings. Lydia loved to play with the garden hose, making rainbows and singing as she watered, sometimes under the lights of the street lamps and the moon. Over the next few years, which included a 1996 regional “bud convention,” we discarded all of the ‘Lion’s Share’ seedlings, because the colors never cranked up. We pitched bunches of poorly formed flowers, mostly in dirty shades of off-white. We also narrowed the ‘Doo Dah’ babies down to two, and we all agreed that L-2 90 was the superior selection. We began building stock up for introduction. I sent some to Phil Williams and some to Keith Keppel for testing. Lydia died before we had enough stock of L-2-90, which would posthumously carry her name in

her honor—‘Lydia Safan-Swiastyn’ (2000). I like to think she took her singing, rainbow garden hose into a newly enriched heaven.

Her iris made its debut in Phil Williams’ consistently wonderful 2000 Rockytop Gardens catalog with the following description: Deep yellow standards; electric blue-lavender blended falls; yellow hafts and narrow fall edges; gold beards. A beautiful flower on branched, budded stalks. Fertile parent—take note hybridizers! The master, Keith Keppel put some pollen from his eventually Dykes Medal-winning ‘Sea Power’ on ‘Lydia Safan-Swiastyn’ and numbered a litter of seedlings. In 2008, I received an unsolicited box from Keith. Surprises don’t get any better than that. The box contained the TBs ‘Silk Road’ (2008) and ‘Bollywood’ (2007), and a dashing little orange bicolor MDB named ‘Icon’ (2008). ‘Lydia Safan-Swiastyn’, or “LSS” as she’s abbreviated around here, has some American and Australian grandchildren now, a couple of which live out my back window. Keith was kind enough to send the catalogs that listed “LSS” as a parent of these fine progeny for all of Lydia’s children. Come spring, “Big Bro” may have lots to watch again. Will the plot twist further? ♣



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Stan Sass, Nebraska

Photographing Irises

I have two hobbies. One is raising irises and the other is photography, and the two mesh beautifully.

In shooting photo of iris, four things work best for me. First, I use a sturdy tripod. I get sharper images and it lets me work with the iris and settings with both hands. Second, I try to shoot when there is a thin overcast in the sky because the light is more evenly distributed and there are no “hot spots” on the flower. Third, I select the iris just like I would for a show—one that would get a blue ribbon if put on a show bench. Finally, the background can't distract from the image. I have a homemade background which is a large ceiling tile covered on one side with dark green velvet and it generally photographs as black. I have also discovered, after a little experimentation, a location in my yard where a pine tree and the grass in the yard make a background that enhances the photo and does not distract.

This process most often requires cutting the iris and putting it in a vase which holds it very well for shooting



Photo: Stan Sass

'Jazz Era' (Keppel, 2010)

a close-up. Then I get to enjoy the iris in my home where it doesn't get bashed by the wind or pummeled by the rain—this is Nebraska after all!

I have more than seventy different irises, and I will shoot 100 or more digital images during bloom season whether in the bed using the hand-held background or in the yard. I get some okay photos, a lot of acceptable pictures, but now and then the wow factor kicks in and the bloom season is extended in my photo album all year long. One of my wow factor photos from 2011 was this shot of 'Jazz Era' (Keppel, 2010). This is shot with the assistance of my wife Twila. She held the homemade background. The sky was thinly overcast that day. ♣



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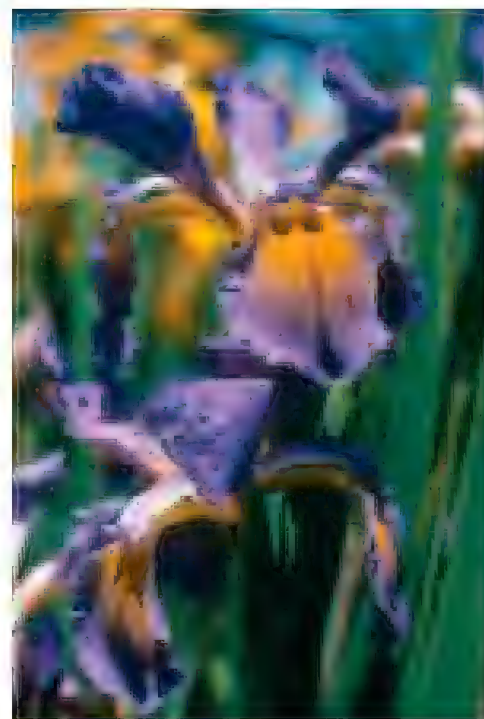
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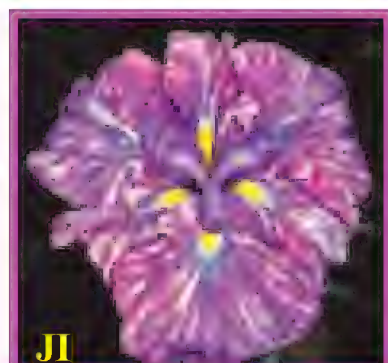
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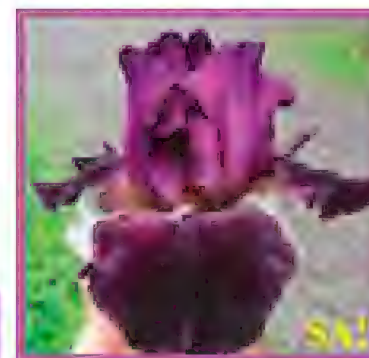
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Selling Irises at the Farmers' Market: Part One

BY PAT MCNEAL, MARYLAND

Editor's Note: Pat McNeal will share her expertise in a two-part series. In Part 1, presented here, she writes about her early experiences and underscores the importance of taking good photos. In Part 2, she'll offer tips into setting up your market stand for sales. Part 2 will appear in the July 2012 issue of Irises.



'Before the Storm' (Innerst, 1989) at various times of the day.

I think that most people who have grown irises soon find that they have more increase than they can use, and despite their best efforts at finding new homes for their iris babies, are eventually faced with a dilemma: what to do with them all. After all, what iris lover can throw them away?

About 30 years ago, I was given several varieties of irises—about a dozen in all. Over time, as they multiplied, I gave many away, sold “a truckload” (you dig them) for \$25 and planted them along one side of our large organic vegetable garden, alternating varieties to mix up the colors. I had seven groupings that included one of each variety. For about 25 years, I had the same, dozen-or-so, unknown varieties which bloomed beautifully each year. I was happy with them, until 2007.

That year, as I was searching the Internet for information about a statue called “Pioneer Woman,” up popped a picture of an iris named ‘Pioneer Woman’ (Black, 2002)—a much newer, beautiful yellow and white iris that infected me with the “iris virus.” I just had to have it!

As I searched for a source of the iris, I saw so many, even more beautiful, new irises that I was forever hooked! It wouldn't do to get just the one. Who knew that irises had become so beautiful over the years? Certainly not I!

But what to do with all the ones I had already? I put an ad in the paper and sold “you-dig” groupings for \$25 each. I only sold three groupings, so I gave one set to a local church for their yard sale. I wanted to keep one, but still had two more. I wondered if they might sell at the local farmers' market and decided to give it a try.

By that time (it was July), all blooms had long faded. I happened to have a few digital pictures, but they were mostly landscape-type shots with clumps of several varieties in one photo. I did have a few shots of single blooms or stalks, but nothing great. I didn't know the names of any of them. Still, it was the best I could do, and I went to market for a couple of weeks with clean, trimmed rhizomes and my poor excuses for pictures.

The rhizomes were on the small side, since they were overcrowded for too long. I offered them in bags of six or twelve mixed varieties (I threw in a bonus iris if they bought twelve) for a nominal fee—I think for \$6 or \$10 respectively—just to find them homes. I was surprised how well they sold and came away with enough money to buy a bunch of newer ones. I ended up acquiring about 75 new-to-me, named varieties with the money that year, some of them as bonuses.

The next year, 2008, I took better pictures when my irises were in bloom. I was also able to identify a few of the original varieties with a little luck and some help from HIPS members—'Helen Collingwood' (Smith, 1949), 'True Delight' (Sturtevant, 1924), and 'Indian



'Cherished Friendship' (Hager/DuBose, 2000) at various times of the day.

Chief' (Ayres, 1929). I had better rhizomes, too, so I went to market again, but on a regular basis for six to seven weeks in July and August. Most of the ones I sold were the original, largely-unnamed varieties, but I had a few of the newer, more vigorous varieties to sell as well. With the better pictures, they sold well, and I again took the money and bought more new additions for my growing collection.

I also entered some of my pictures in the AIS Photo Contest that year and won the "Irises in a Field" category, earning me a free membership in the AIS. Thus I became active in our local iris society, and because I now had named varieties, I began showing my irises. In 2010, I won the Queen of Show for 'Disco Eclipse' (Johnson, 2003) and a runner-up for 'Dividing Line' (Bunnell, 2005), plus I won the Silver Medallion for the most blue

ribbons—all this because I began selling my extra irises at the farmers' market and buying newer, fancier varieties with the money.

I've been selling irises each year since 2007, learning more and more each year about how to do it well, and buying more irises with the money. By my current standards, that first year was an embarrassment! Each year, I've made more money than the previous year, and I've become known as "The Iris Lady." I find that I do at least as much educating people about irises and troubleshooting their culture challenges as I do selling, but it is enjoyable. It's also very rewarding to have previous customers come up to me each following year to tell me how beautifully their irises bloomed!

For those of you who may want to try sharing your irises at a local farmers' market, it's very important to get good photos of your irises while they are in bloom this spring. The better your pictures are, the better the irises will sell. You can work with digital photos much easier than standard prints from film. Most everyone has a digital camera these days. But if you don't have one, you can probably find one that is affordable or borrow one from a friend.

Lighting is an important consideration. I prefer to take the photos on an overcast or drizzly day; you get softer shadows and nicer colors, perhaps with some drops of rain on the petals to make the flower look interesting and fresh. Because you want your photo to look like the actual flower, midday is best for your photos; early morning or late evening pictures can give you distorted colors. Bright sunshine gives harsh shadows and potentially overexposed areas on the blooms, but if you must take them in bright sunlight, it will probably work best to take them with the sun over your shoulder rather than directly overhead.

In general, you will want a good close-up photo of a single bloom, but if the plant has exceptional stalks, or a spectacular clump effect, you may also want to take those photos as well. Study the photos in your iris catalogs and notice the different views that are presented. Try to duplicate the views you like best. Mostly, the best views are about at eye-level, so learn to kneel down to take the photo. Choose a fresh flower and take several different angles and views. Then you can pick out the photos that you think will best represent the flower. Download your photos onto your computer and be sure to back them up, just in case! ♣

Pat McNeal sells irises at her local farmers' market and promotes the joy of irises in her Preston, Maryland community. She can be reached at thegood4all@verizon.net.

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Basic Pests and Diseases of Bearded Irises

BY KELLY D. NORRIS, IOWA

Excerpted and adapted from A Guide to Bearded Irises: Cultivating the Rainbow for Beginners and Enthusiasts, Kelly D. Norris, copyright 2012. Used with permission of Timber Press.

If you asked me if bearded irises are easy to grow, and restricted my answer to one word, I'd shout, "Yes!" In the grand scheme of things, this is abundantly true. I can think of plenty of plants much harder to grow—Himalayan blue poppies (*Meconopsis*) and noble rhubarb (*Rheum nobile*) come to mind, both of which fall well outside the realm of even marginal plant snobbery. But bearded irises, difficult to grow? Rubbish.



However, I fully appreciate how important it is to be aware of potential pest and disease problems associated with the plants we grow and love. But sometimes I feel knowing what ails our plants is like a physician's desk reference or WebMD—it brings out the hypochondriac in us. In this article, I've chosen to cover the biggest potential challenges gardeners face when growing bearded irises, with the underlying sentiment being "bearded irises are relatively carefree." They aren't hybrid tea roses, after all (I know the rose people among us just cringed a little).

Iris Scorch

Iris scorch is a bizarre malady of irises, and one poorly understood by science. Researchers have attempted to tackle the disease without arriving at much of an understanding of what causes it, how and if it's preventable, and what it actually does to the plant. The symptoms are easy enough to spot—the fans start to assume a burnt look with red and bronze tips migrating down the blade until the whole clump looks "fried." In established clumps the affliction seems to start from the center and work its way outward concentrically. New growth often



looks stunted or deformed, but strangely enough a clump affected in the fall of one season might be perfectly healthy and normal the next. Some experts have previously recommended digging up a plant at the onset of symptoms, though it's unclear whether this has any impact on the plant's survivability or not. If you do decide to dig up and isolate plants for replanting at a later date, you'll notice that while the rhizomes remain firm, the roots may have rotted and died. With little more than conjecture and observation to go on, it doesn't appear that the condition is infectious. I've observed scorched clumps in production fields of irises with no regular pattern of incidence or spread. A row of a thousand plants may have one scorched plant with others never showing any symptoms at all. In a word—bizarre.

There is an element of experimentation in all gardening—don't be afraid to kill a few plants for the sake of knowing what thrives and what doesn't. The bottom line: don't fret about your bearded irises. It takes away from enjoying them. Listen to, learn from, and love them, and you'll be well on your way to keeping a healthy assembly of bearded irises alive and well in your garden.



Gray Mold and Crown Rot

Bearded irises can fall prey to other rots, such as crown rot (caused by the mustard seed fungus, *Sclerotium rolfsii*) and botrytis (*Botrytis convoluta*), aka gray mold. Botrytis seems to be more of an issue in climates like the Pacific Northwest, where prolonged periods of wetness contribute to the germination and colonization of a fuzzy gray covering of mold on the surfaces of the rhizomes. It has a way of desiccating rhizomes to an almost corky condition but will often not infect new developing increases. If a serious threat is posed, spraying triadimefon (Strike® 50 WDG) per label recommendations has been known to control further spread of the disease.

Crown rot, or southern blight, is fairly ubiquitous and has a history of infecting a variety of horticultural and agronomic crops. It too occurs during wet periods, particularly in the Midwest and South during wet winters and in soils with poor drainage. It shows up as sclerotia, dormant fungal propagules that resemble small seeds, usually at ground level. It tends to be something of a silent killer, going unnoticed until fans start

collapsing, revealing softened crowns and rhizomes and an abundance of tan or black sclerotia. If infestation warrants chemical treatment, and at that only in the severest of cases, fungicides containing PCNB can be used, if available. PCNB is heavily regulated, and many products have been cancelled for use in the United States. Though an unpleasant thought, destruction of plants and surrounding soil is another strategy for eradicating the disease, but only in the most severe circumstances.

Bacterial Soft Rot

This is often, though not always, an aftereffect of iris borers. Many thousands of bacteria species populate our garden soils, some beneficial and some not. In wet years, it's especially common to notice some rotting at the base of iris clumps and other perennials with fleshy crowns, most often caused by *Erwinia carotovora*, noted for producing a terribly foul odor. Incidents of rot in wet years likely have little to do with iris borers and more to do with persistently wet growing conditions. At any rate, rot is fairly manageable in the iris garden if caught early, so be observant. With spring outbreaks, the easiest control involves a bucket of bleach water and a tenacious attitude. Just apply the solution directly, either straight from the jug or diluted by half with water (depending on your level of tenacity), to the base of the clump. You'll start to notice disappearance of the rot within a few days after application.

If on the other hand you discover rot while dividing a clump late in the summer, the most logical method is to dunk the rhizomes in a bucket of the aforementioned bleach solution for up to an hour. This treatment handily disinfects your rhizomes of bacteria. Replant as before and don't worry about needing to "treat the soil." The soil isn't to blame as much as the organisms in the soil, and they likely became a problem only because of weather or a pest like iris borer.

To avoid bacterial soft rot in the future (or in the first place), ensure your soil has good drainage. Second, avoid overfertilization: green, fleshy foliage is a banquet to bacteria craving nitrogen. If you use raw manure, do so with care since soils with too much manure can lead to a similar overgrowth of foliage in the spring. Aged manure or compost works much better anyway.



Fungal Leaf Spot

A variety of soil-borne fungi can cause leaf spot on irises. Rarely do they prove fatal. If spraying is warranted, copper-based fungicides usually do the trick when regularly applied during the wettest parts of the spring. At the very most these yellow to brown circular dots are unsightly, and some cultivars of irises prove more resistant than others. Tough, tolerant cultivars will often display clear, waxy blue-green foliage when their less-resistant neighbors sport ill-looking, yellow-brown foliage. Regrettably, breeding for disease-resistance to foliar maladies like leaf spot just isn't on the radar for most iris breeders.



Iris Borers

Of any pest or disease problems you might encounter, this takes the prize for being the most difficult to cure, the most frustrating, and, sadly, the most detrimental to the health of your irises. Iris borers are the larva of the iris borer moth (*Macronoctua onusta*), a nonnative moth first introduced to the eastern United States. The moth itself is rather nondescript, a brownish sort of thing with sometimes darker spots on its wings.

Managing, controlling, and eradicating iris borers depends on a sound knowledge of their life cycle. The adult female moth lays up to 1,000 eggs, in late summer, usually amid garden debris like dead iris leaves, mulch, and even nearby plants. Small, round, and pearl-like, these eggs overwinter and hatch in the waking days of spring. Brown larvae emerge and grow to 3 to 5 cm in length as they munch their way through nearby irises. Signs of their entry often show up as watery holes or wet stains along the margins of the fans. A single iris borer can handily damage several plants, exiting through the rhizomes via a small hole. Most damage occurs between mid-April and mid-June, after which the larvae pupate and emerge as moths again in late summer, ready to deposit the eggs of the next generation.

The best iris borer control comes down to one simple rule—preventing their infestation in the first place. Keep your iris beds free of dead leaves and debris and minimize the use of heavy, hardwood mulch around the crowns of iris rhizomes. By lessening suitable nesting sites for roving female moths, you'll limit or eliminate egg-laying entirely.

But let's face it—debris happens, right? So for the pyromaniacs in the crowd, one of the more active



control methods involves a propane or butane tank and a match. Please proceed with caution and check with local ordinances if you live within city limits as to the use of fire in your backyard. Early in the spring before much growth has taken place, gather the necessary tools for making and managing a fire, take a stiff shot of hard liquor, and tromp toward the most suspect clump of bearded irises. Carefully burn off any leaf debris remaining from the year before, and don't worry if you happen to lightly toast the surface of the rhizomes. After years of doing this I can tell you that despite its seemingly drastic nature, burning your iris clumps in the spring is the single best way to control borers without adversely harming your irises. The fire removes the eggs, effectively eliminating borers, and in some years seems to hasten growth of the clump.

If using pesticides, keep in mind that iris borers are most vulnerable in their larval stage. Spraying a clump of irises in late August when the moths are hatching from their chrysalises or late in the fall won't do much good. Time spray applications during and immediately following bloom season, or whenever you directly observe foraging by living borers. Imidacloprid (Merit®), for example, is systemically applied early in the spring, while acephate (Orthene®) is locally applied once every two weeks. As with any pesticides, take great care in applying them, follow label instructions carefully, and avoid using near food crops. ♣

Kelly D. Norris is the editor-in-chief for The American Iris Society, manages his family's nursery Rainbow Iris Farm, and is the author of A Guide to Bearded Irises: Cultivating the Rainbow for Beginners and Enthusiasts. He can be reached at editor@irises.org.



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An Iris Dream

BY NAOMI DIVINCENZO, COLORADO

Avid, Colorado-based iris enthusiast Naomi DiVincenzo tells the story about how she fell in love with irises and now dreams of one day owning her own iris farm.

“Nothing happens unless first a dream.”
– Carl Sandburg

This is one of my favorite quotes and yes, I’ve always been a dreamer.

If you were to ask me 15 years ago what my goals were for the future, my answer, if I could have even thought of one, would be quite different from what I would tell you today. Fifteen years ago, I didn’t know, or care much about irises of any sort, though I have loved and collected many different types of plants.

My life has not been very stable as far as staying in one place for very long. I was born in Colorado Springs, and at the age of 19, married and moved to Texas. After eight years, we moved to Las Vegas, Nevada and stayed there for 10 years. My children and I moved back to my hometown, Colorado Springs in 1996. As fate would have it, I was fortunate to be able to buy my own home for the first time in my life, two year later, at the age of 38.

My house has always been full of plants of all shapes and sizes—the more unique the better. When I lived in Texas, I collected different types of succulents, mostly *Lithops* due to their variety and odd shapes. We then moved to Las Vegas, I wanted to learn about gardening, and I discovered that they enjoyed two growing seasons. In Nevada, tomato plants could easily reach six feet tall! After moving back home to Colorado, I learned that things did not grow as easily.

So here I was with new home, new yard, and no clue about what would grow here. I was fortunate, though, that my aunt and uncle belonged to the Elmohr Iris Society and had many iris beds. Every July, they would have a digging party and invited me to come over, and said that I could choose a few irises as payment for helping out. At that time, it was something to do, and it was fun spending time with family after having been gone for so long. Every year, they would dig and divide, and soon, it was something that I longed for and looked forward to.

When my first small collection of irises bloomed the next year, I was very pleased. They multiplied easily and looked very nice under my daughter’s window. I actually wanted to plant cactuses under her window to keep the uninvited away, but the irises worked well enough. My first irises were ‘National Velvet’ (Baumunk, R. 1998), ‘Arizona Holiday’ (Durrance, 1988), ‘San Juan Silver’ (Miller, 1998), ‘On Line’ (Schreiner’s, 1980), ‘Feed Back’ (Hager, 1983), and a yellow that I can’t remember the name of.

I had no idea how large the flowers would actually be, and when I saw how velvety ‘National Velvet’ was

and the opalescent glow on ‘Arizona Holiday’, I knew that I had to have more. Every year, I would collect what I could from my aunt and uncle, and then, some years later, I found out about the Elmohr Iris Society’s annual rhizome sale. Wow! What a wonderful afternoon that was! I was surrounded by boxes and boxes of many different sizes and colors of iris. It wasn’t long before I dug out the flower bed that I had made in the front yard, discarded whatever it was that I had there, and started filling it up with irises. One year, I had arrived late on the last day of the sale and the ladies were already packing everything up. Thanks to the generosity of those dear sweet ladies, I went home with over 50 new irises for the cost of the gas I used to get there. Granted, they were leftovers, but I didn’t care. I then began listing all my new irises and created a map of where I had planted them. This was the beginning of my first iris journal.

In 2001, I met my husband and we decided to have a house built on the other side of town. The move was horrible. I ended up digging my iris in a rush, in the rain, and did not get to mark many of them at all. It’s a good thing that I had written down names and descriptions in my journal, or I would be lost. As I realized a couple of years later, I had only salvaged 15-20 irises from the old yard, so it was fairly simple to figure out what was what. The following year I jumped in with both feet and joined the local iris society, The American Iris Society, the Historic Iris Preservation Society, The Tall Bearded Iris Society and the Species Iris Group of North America. I eagerly began to learn about historic irises and learned that name of the wild irises that we see every year when we go camping is *Iris missouriensis*.

At the first meeting of the year for the Elmohr Iris Society, I was happy to meet Lowell Baumunk and Steve Schreiner. Mr. Baumunk is the creator of my favorite iris, ‘National Velvet’, and to me, Schreiner’s Gardens is the “iris Mecca” of the U. S.!

Of Rhizomes and Rabbits

Two years ago, my husband and I decided to give up on growing grass due to the watering restrictions in our area. (Actually, I like to think he finally gave in to my pleading to build iris beds!) We dug out all the dying grass and a small tree, built a block wall and filled it with top soil to make the yard level as it used to slope towards the street.

What great fun it was to fill up my new front yard with irises! I must have planned it out more than half a dozen times before I decided what to plant where. I had collected rocks and wood for years for my dream



Before: removing sod and preparing the bed.



After: front yard iris garden.

yard, and it was finally happening! For some varieties, I just moved the entire clump, because I didn't want the whole area to be a scene of little trimmed leaves. And, of course I was coaxed into planting other things by my husband. It did need some color, and some other items of interest, even if I was a little begrudging about it.

Winter came, and all my "babies" were doing very well in their new home. You have to understand that where we live, the soil is all sand. Having raised the yard up about two feet and filled it with new top soil, I had irises thriving that had not bloomed in years! Understandably, I anxiously waited for spring time. Then the rabbits arrived. We'd had rabbits in the neighborhood before, but not like this! January and February became months of dread, as I found more and more plants nibbled down to the quick. I didn't know rabbits liked irises!

We did our best to chase away the bunnies for weeks. I ended up buying several large containers of cayenne pepper and liberally sprinkled their contents over my yard until it looked like I had sprayed large red circles with spray paint everywhere! A few of the bunnies even dug up the rhizomes and gnawed off chunks. These, of course, did not survive, but the others did, thankfully.

One family dug a den under one of my other perennials and stayed, but they also stopped eating my iris.

An Iris In The Sun

This year while making my 'wish list' I discovered that some irises have diamond dusting. I never really noticed it before. I was always interested in the different colors. Each year, my wish list changes according to what my "new love" is for the season. This year it was scent and sparkles.

An iris is most beautiful when it's up close and personal, and we know that a picture never does it justice. My coworkers graciously tolerate my endless speeches and pictures loaded onto the many computer screens available to me at work. I have brought bloom stalks to work in the past and decorated our break room with jars full. But this year I had to show them how they look when the sun is shining on them. They know that all they have to say is how much they love this one or that one in order to insure a gift rhizome in July.

The infamous Patty Hearst once said "Choice is the enemy of commitment." It's so true, isn't it? And it certainly applies to irises!

After moving 30-40 varieties of irises into the front yard and then finding that I could squeeze 30-40 more in, I realized that what I really need to do is buy a few acres of land and start my own iris farm--really! Within the last few seasons, my collection has grown from 65 to at least 220 varieties. I've outgrown my own space to say the least. How can anyone have too many irises? I want them all!

I purchased a domain name last year, and am currently working on building a website. This is what I really want to do. I have a lot to learn and am eager to do so. With the encouragement and advice of a few hybridizer friends and my best friend and enabler, my husband, my dream is to have acres of beautiful blooms. I hope to create many of my own hybrids, too. ♣

Naomi DiVincenzo is always adding more irises to her Colorado Springs garden. She can be reached at naomimade@comcast.net.

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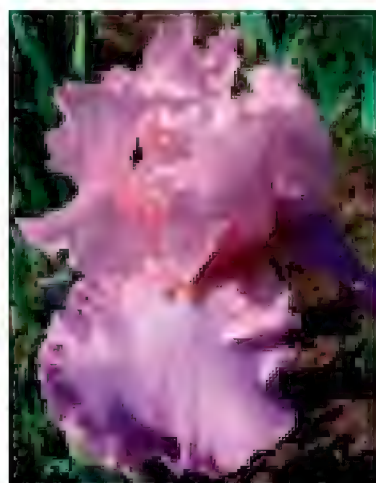
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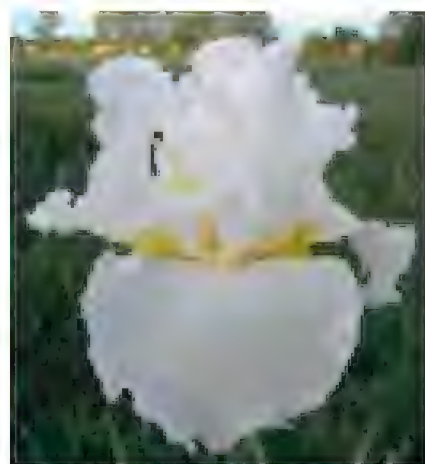
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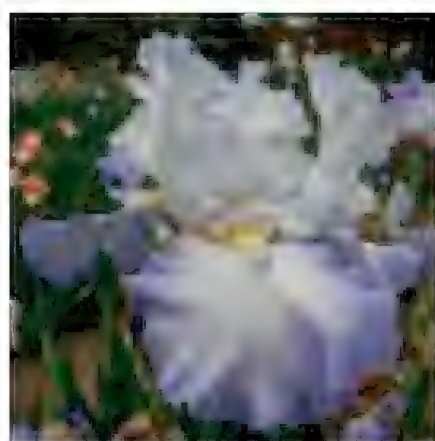
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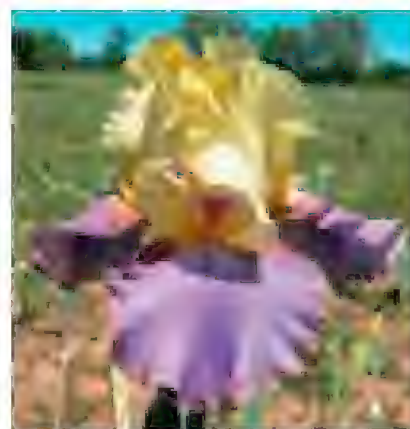
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Rhizomes, leaves, stems, standards, falls, hafts, beards, styles, even veins in the iris flower have different functions—hence the term functional domains. These domains have their own regulatory genes that form their respective organs during development. Some of these regulatory genes turn on or off the carotenoid and anthocyanin color pathways—the sequence of biochemical reactions necessary to produce a colored pigment. There are at least six genetic domains in tall bearded iris flowers. These are the standards, falls, hafts, beards, veins, and styles. Remember, the falls, standards, and styles differentiate from different whorls of developing (meristematic) plant cells and take their own color pathways with them. Therefore, these floral parts should not be considered as one unit. Each of these domains has a duplicate gene that regulates its color pathway. We know these genetic domains exist because of the different colors expressed. Take for example an amoena flower with white standards and colored falls. In the apricot amoena pictured, both carotenoid and anthocyanin pathways are turned off in the standards, but they are turned on in the falls. In other words, the gene that initiates each pathway in the standards is dysfunctional and produces no pigment or white standards, but the duplicate genes in the falls have functional alleles and produce falls with colored pigments. Although not readily apparent, the apricot

amoena pictured has an anthocyaninic mask in the falls. This mask gives the falls their pink appearance.

A solid colored flower, or self, has its color genes in sync—the standards, falls, hafts, beards, veins, and styles all express the same alleles for color. Thus the duplicate regulatory genes in a self have similar alleles, but once the synchrony¹ between alleles is changed a wonderful world of color combinations opens up.

Iris breeding for the past 100 years has focused on changing the synchrony between floral genetic domains to develop new color combinations (not new pigments). For example, first there was the amoena and then came the reverse amoena. The development of amoena, bitone, and luminata flowers has been a progression of changing the synchrony² between duplicate genes in different domains.

Case in point, the seedling “Tricolor 1201” expresses a different color in three domains—purple falls, blue standards, and yellow styles. The flower seems complex, but disregarding the lack of blue in the styles it is simple to understand in the context of genetic domains—it is a blue self over a yellow amoena. The concept of genetic domains is important to iris breeders because it helps us plan crosses and make selections to get the color combinations we want. I sometimes find myself keeping material that I would otherwise discard just because of its domain color. For example, I about discarded 1201 until I realized it was a tricolor and that it was a great

Genetic Domains in Tall Bearded Iris Flowers

BY DAN H. MECKENSTOCK, PH.D., KANSAS



Left to Right: Apricot amoena, pedigree unknown; Tri-color 1201, derived from ‘Carl and Sissy’ (Black, 2002); Inbred line 1133-S1, derived from apricot amoena seedling.

example to demonstrate the concept of genetic domains. Sadly, though, this plant perished in the summer of 2011 due to a prolonged heat wave.

I first became aware of genetic domains in iris flowers when I self-pollinated the apricot amoena pictured earlier. I made the cross hoping to intensify the pink color in the falls, but this did not happen. Serendipity stepped in and one of the segregates was inbred line 1133-S1. Not a particularly attractive flower, but very revealing about domains. The first thing you notice is that the yellow color in the falls has dropped out (i.e., carotenoid pathway was shut off) but the light blue color (anthocyaninic mask) remained. This indicates the regulatory genes of these two pathways (i.e., yellow *Y* gene and purple *PL* gene) are independent, non-linked genes that exist on different chromosomes. It also indicates both the carotenoid and anthocyanin regulatory genes are heterozygous in the falls. The second important piece of information from this cross is that the yellow color or carotenoid pathway in the hafts remained turned on—hence the hafts and falls are different domains. As an aside, I have long contended that heterozygosity in the carotenoid pathway keeps us from developing a watermelon red colored (carotenoid) flower. This cross supports my hypothesis that early genes in the carotenoid pathway are heterozygous. However, this deceptively pink flower turned out to be a yellow amoena and because I did not get any pink segregates I could not pursue my theory that selfing intensifies pink. I have since switched to diploids in hopes of simplifying the development of a red iris. Presently, I am looking for the illusive “t” gene in the $2n=24$ background. I would appreciate knowing the whereabouts of any pink diploids I can include in my studies.

Evidence of genetic domains in iris flowers has been with us since the beginning, but we have never

recognized them as such. *Iris variegata* is an excellent example of veins and falls being separate domains. I began this article by saying iris breeding has focused on changing the synchrony of duplicate genes. In closing, I would like to say that ‘Telepathy’ (Keppel, 2003) shows enhancement in luminatas. Although pale veins have been around, Telepathy is an excellent example of a flower that has reversed the traditional blue vein on a blue fall to a white vein. Once we understand genetic domains, we can better appreciate the progression of changing synchrony between genetic domains that iris breeders have accomplished.

Dan Meckenstock is a retired plant breeder from Hays, Kansas. He can be contacted at dmeck@eaglecom.net. He would like to thank Tom Silvers for his review of this article, his comments and suggestions. ♣

¹ - Synchrony refers to whether the genotype of the duplicate genes is identical. Although plausible, there is no evidence to suggest the carotenoid or anthocyanin pathways have been duplicated synchronously, just the regulatory gene that initiates the pathway appears to have been duplicated. A yellow-pink bicolor would be the tell-tale sign of duplicate carotenoid pathways, but this flower has yet to turn up. However, this does not mean one will not appear. Breeders just need to know what to look for and to recognize its importance when it appears. If pathways have been duplicated then many more color combinations are on the horizon.

² - Changing synchrony refers to activating or deactivating a gene in one domain while leaving its duplicate in another domain unchanged. Thus, one gene is dominant while its duplicate has mutated to recessive. This process should not be confused with “breaking linkage” which separates two genes on the same chromosome.



Left to Right: *Iris variegata*; ‘Telepathy’ (Keppel, 2003); Author planting seedlings.

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OSAGE RIVER (Niswonger'12) Spuria, Sdlg. Sp.1-08: Missouri Rainbows X I. cartharinae. 40" (102 cm) tall, early. This is a bright medium blue with a small yellow signal in the falls. This is another approach to creating a spuria with "summer green" foliage. There is also some hybrid vigor by crossing a cultivar with mixed parentages to a species that has summer-green foliage. These first generation crosses are not very fertile but the pollen should work well with 40 or 42 chromosome hybrids. — \$30.00

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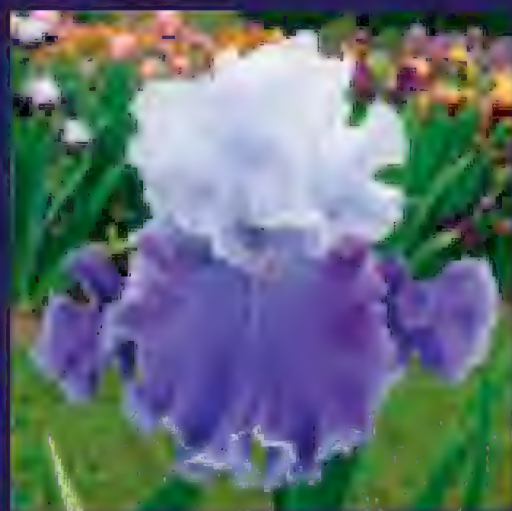
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The Quest for Orange

BY HEATHER PRYOR, AUSTRALIA

'South Yarra Darling' (H. Pryor, 1999/00)

My quest to create a truly orange-coloured Louisiana iris cultivar (more commonly known as Heather's 'orange brick road of hybridizing endeavors') came about by accidental design. While I had decided to make the quest for orange a lifetime hybridizing goal, that didn't actually mean that it would happen. I know now that wishing for something that doesn't really exist can be fraught with peril. Friendships can be lost or made along such the path.

At the outset I was very kindly given access to a lot of cultivars from an existing gene pool. I made a conscious effort from the outset to work in a completely different area of the gene pool to see what would emerge. I continue to follow this mantra today.

So, what makes orange? Yellow combined with red? Yellow combined with pink? I tried all of these configurations, plus a few other odd-ball ones to see what would happen. This may not have

not the most scientific of approaches, but there was logic in the plan—a bit, at least.

Back in 1992, an interesting seedling emerged from the mire of Bernard's and my first series of efforts. One seedling was subsequently registered as 'Bushfire Moon' (H. Pryor, 1995/96) with the parentage (Alluvial Gold X Gladiator's Gift). It has similar coloration to a zucchini or pumpkin flower; not quite yellow and not quite orange. Other siblings exhibited apricot and gingery-apricot hues, and while not quite orange either, they obviously had the same genes, so all were pressed into service. 'Whispered Promise' (H. Pryor, 1996/97),



'Bushfire Moon' (H. Pryor, 1995/96)

'Imperial Lantern' (H. Pryor, 2005/06)

'Lost for Words' (H. Pryor, 1998)



'Tandoori Sizzler' (H. Pryor, 2012)

a soft apricot self, and 'Ginger Fudge' (H. Pryor, 1998) were all exported from Australia to the U.S., along with 'Bushfire Moon' in the mid 1990s. The chase was on.

1992 was a watershed year for the quest for orange. Two things happened. First, the 'Bushfire Moon' line was created. Secondly, a seedling was created in the 1992 bloom season, but it didn't bloom for the first time until 1994. 'Lost for Words' (H. Pryor, 1998) was a pale apricot self, with a very fine overlay of orange in the petal coloration. Like 'Bushfire Moon', 'Gladiator's Gift' (Taylor, 1990/91) was in the parentage of 'Lost for Words'. A kernel of an idea emerged.

Another 1990 cross, using 'Gladiator's Gift' selfed, brought forth some most interesting, shorter-growing cultivars in tan, burnt caramel and soft honey-caramel hues. One or two of these seedlings were crossed with 'Bushfire Moon' to see what would happen. At this point Bernard decided to work more on creating a new range of shorter-growing Louisiana irises for the increasing number of small garden, courtyard, and small frog pond gardeners here in Australia. That, as they say, is another story.

In subsequent seasons, things moved along quite nicely with 'Bushfire Moon' giving off a few nice babies, including 'Imperial Lantern' (H. Pryor, 2005/06). From a cross of Bushfire Moon X Future Classic, it was a little more orange and had a most distinctive, recurved flower shape, and perfect, show-quality stalks inherited from 'Bushfire Moon'. What else?

Another orange brick road effort in 1994 brought forth 'Bound for Glory' (H. Pryor, 2000), from a cross of Bushfire Moon X Hot and Spicy, and in the same year the cheekily-named 'South Yarra Darling' (H. Pryor,

1999/00), from a cross of Alicia Clare sib. x Hot and Spicy, was registered and subsequently released. 'Bound for Glory' has picked-up its own fan club of devotees in the USA, so I guess the name was rather apt. 'South Yarra Darling', though extremely showy and a great garden performer, has never been quite as popular. Yes, names do make a difference!

1995 saw 'Oh Happy Day' (H. Pryor, 2000/01), from a cross of Bushfire Moon x Lost For Words, emerge with what could probably be labelled the best possible orange pedigree of the time. A highly ruffled version of 'Bushfire Moon', with a deeper orange colouration, great branching and show-quality stalks, 'Oh Happy Day' was aptly named. It certainly made us sing! Interestingly, this cultivar has flower coloration more like 'Bushfire Moon', but it actually flowers in our garden at the same time as 'Lost for Words'. It's a happy child indeed.

In 1996 'Lost for Words' brought forth another equally intoxicating orange-ish cultivar. 'Exploding Star' (H. Pryor, 2007/08) is a great dark ginger-orange self with a pronounced golden rim. The star signal pattern completes the picture. Another new color combination was born.

I must add here that every year there were multiple crossings of similarly colored seedlings from similar parentages. Some whole crosses were a complete miss. Lots of lovely pure yellow selfs, golden selfs, and even pink selfs emerged along the way. All were either pressed into service or found their way to the compost heap—the joys of hybridizing!

1996 was a great year for us. Another whole series of interesting things emerged. 'Lost For Words' brought forth a luminous, tutti frutti-blend seedling that went on to be registered as 'Jive Talkin' (H. Pryor, 2002). A whole array of golden-sunset hues, shot-silk pinks and sunset-oranges siblings emerged as the season progressed. We noticed that most of the siblings changed colour as the days progressed. None faded out to chalky-milky white. They kept their colors, but the combinations changed with the days. Was 'Jive Talkin' orange? Well, not quite, but some of the siblings exhibited plicata patterns. Future years of observation confirmed this—another path forged.

Another 1996 seedling from 'Lost for Words' brought us about as close to orange as we thought possible. Ultimately named 'Mumma's Marmalade' (H. Pryor, R. 2002), this orangey-red confection looks very close to orange. It has not yet been released, but will be heading to the U.S. later in 2012 for ultimate release in a year or two.

Another 1996 seedling, which links back to 'Bushfire Moon' and the original 1990 selfing of the 'Gladiator's



Top Row: 'Mumma's Marmalade' (H. Pryor, R. 2002); 'Froth and Bubble' (H. Pryor, 2007)
 Bottom Row: 'Bound for Glory' (H. Pryor, 2000); 'Jive Talkin' (H. Pryor, 2002)

Gift' seedlings, was a frothy, brandy-orange self with six-plus bud placements and a separate branch on mostly show-quality flowering stalks. Ultimately registered as 'Froth and Bubble' (H. Pryor, 2007) this seedling has excellent growth qualities as well. An established clump in full bloom looks a quivering mass of caramel-orange froth.

But the closest achievement to date came in 1998 when a cross between a 'Bushfire Moon' sibling and 'Lost For Words' bloomed for the first time in 2000. The slightly reflexed flowers showed off the ginger-orange flowers to perfection. 'Tandoori Sizzler' is being released

in the U.S. in 2012, so you can decide for yourself how close to orange it really is.

Work continues on this quest for orange. It probably always will for as long as I can hold tweezers and as long as there's a Louisiana iris around that has pollen to share.

Heather Pryor and husband Bernard daub pollen on all sorts of Louisianas at their Sydney-based nursery in Australia. Their introductions are available in this country through Iris City Gardens. They can be reached at irishaven@pip.com.au. ❀

Illumination

BY KEITH KEPPEL, OREGON

In 1940, when the first ones appeared in the Sass seedling beds in Nebraska, they were recorded in the selection books as “odds.” In the fifties, when show schedules in northern California had a class for them (remember, this was in the day of color/pattern classes, not cultivar shows), you would find plicata, fancy plicata, and “true fancy.” In the southern half of the state, you might hear them referred to as “weirdies.” It wasn’t until 1972 that they had an official name, when the Median Iris Society’s Genetics Study Panel, chaired by Bee Warburton, proposed the name “luminata” for this strange pattern. The panel proposed the following definition and description:

“Luminata is a genetically reproducible anthocyanin pattern having its colors present in an irregular marbling in the central areas of the petals and absent in the peripheral areas. The marbling effect is produced by non-anthocyanin veining (white or yellow), and there is no anthocyanin in the hafts, the style arms, or the beard.”¹

This definition was amended somewhat in 1990 when an AIS Ad Hoc Committee chaired by Hal Stahly reported in the *AIS Bulletin* that further study (plus interim accomplishments by hybridizers) warranted a rewording of the original definition. The “white or yellow” wording needed expansion to include pink and orange. Also it was pointed out that occasionally style arms, including those of the “type” for the class ‘Moonlit Sea’ (Sass, 1942), do show a light amount of pigment appearing to be anthocyanin, and the actual lighter margin (“peripheral edge”) of the petals may vary from pronounced to slight. The changes were duly approved by the AIS Board of Directors.²

So where did luminatas originate? They tend to bloom exceedingly early, often with the intermediates, making one wonder if there is a genetic background differing in part from mainstream tall bearded. We certainly don’t know all the answers, but the first documented blooming of a luminata with no other admixture of patterns was in Jake Sass’s seedling field in 1940. There were two saved: 40-3, “purple yel glow (odd),” and 40-163, “purple and yel odd,” the latter introduced in 1942 as ‘Bertha Gersdorff’. The following year three more luminatas (“odds”) were numbered, including 41-10 which became ‘Moonlit Sea’.

‘Havelberg’, hybridized in Germany by Theodor Schwarz, was registered in 1959. It was said to have bloomed before World War II, but not registered earlier because of wartime problems. It appears to be the first true European luminata, although luminata patterning occurred in conjunction with plicata patterning as far back as ‘Ensorceleur’ (Cayeux, 1926), and ‘Madame Louis Aureau’ (Cayeux, 1934) was a parent to Jake Sass’s unnamed 1940 luminata seedling.

Luminatas were met with mixed success. Some critics raved about this striking new pattern, others were unenthusiastic. ‘Aladdin’s Wish’ (Murawska, 1945), which along with ‘Moonlit Sea’ was a frontrunner of the class, was dismissed by one writer with the simple comment: “unassuming young man.” Perhaps two dozen luminatas were introduced in America from the forties through the sixties. The Sass family did the most, with ‘Pretty Pansy’ (1946), ‘Cuban Carnival’ (XXXX),

Top Row: 05-79J; 05-81A; 04101C
Middle Row: 05-74A; 05-75C; 05-75G
Bottom Row: 05-69; 05-79B; 06-198A





‘Carnival Lights’ (1953), ‘Fairy Fancy’ (1953), ‘May Sky’ (1955), in addition to the two mentioned earlier. Tom Craig did several—‘Can-Can’ (1951), ‘Glowing Amber’ (1954), ‘Ghostie’ (XXXX), and ‘Weirdie’ (XXXX). A few other hybridizers came up with one or two, but nothing to make an impact. Interest in luminatas was at low ebb.

I might digress at this point to talk about breeding for luminatas. Although theories are always up for debate, it has long been believed that “luminata” is part of an allelic series. Plicata is recessive to self (non-plicata), and the unmarked segregates from plicata breeding (glaciatas) are in turn recessive to plicata. Luminata, like plicata, is dominant over glaciata, but neither plicata nor luminata appear to be dominant over the other. You can have plicata, or you can have luminata, and if you have both occurring concurrently you can have luminata-plicata, where the luminata pattern and the plicata pattern are superimposed.

So how do you breed for more luminatas? Obviously the surest way is to cross two luminatas! Most if not all will be luminatas and any remainder will be totally unmarked glaciatas. Alternatively, you can cross luminata by glaciata and you’ll get some luminatas—how many depends on how the genes are stacked.

In 1978 I crossed ‘Mistress’ (Keppel, 1980), a pink plicata with a high dosage of glaciata, with 75-98B, a bicolored luminata-plicata sib to ‘Peccadillo’ (Keppel, 1983). The seedling had the garden nickname “Fancy Touche,” which if you know the variety ‘Touche’ (Hamblen, 1969) will give a good idea of its color. A single luminata seedling bloomed from the cross in 1980. This seedling, crossed with a glaciata, gave more luminatas. Two generations later came ‘Flights of Fancy’ (1993), ‘Mind Reader’ (1994), and ‘Spirit World’ (1994). This time more hybridizers took up the luminata challenge, and the iris world now has tall bearded luminatas from the hands of Joe Ghio, Lowell Baumunk, Paul Black, Thomas Johnson, Barry Blyth, and others. With more breeders working on them, luminatas possess a wider range of colors and pattern differences.

Prepare yourself for a flood of variations on the luminata theme, and also expect them in various sizes, as luminatas are found among the dwarfs, intermediates, and border irises as well. Each of the three elements which define the luminata pattern can vary considerably:

HEART: Luminatas have a clear, unmarked heart devoid of any anthocyanin pigments. This clear area begins in the far depths of the fall haft, where it joins the floral tube and then extends outward. But how far? In most, earlier luminatas,

this clear area only went as far as a third, or a half, the length of the beard. Now they can extend the full length of the beard and at times even well beyond in a modified “V” pattern. How far can it go? Can it continue further to form a clear blaze area as large and showy as what we now have in zonals? The clear area is usually white, with some yellow (or pink or orange) shading toward the shoulders. But it can also be covered over most or possibly even all of the area with yellow, pink, or orange.

FALL CENTER: We talk of falls being colored by anthocyanin (orchid, violet, purple, or blue tones, but which may also appear wine or reddish or brown dependent upon underlying color), these colored falls with paler non-anthocyanin veining. Some falls are so dark and solid you can only see a gradation of color when the flower begins to fade. Most have readily apparent pale veining. In some, the veins are so broad and prominent that the darker anthocyanin areas appear as distinct islands of color. And in others, they may be so lightly and minimally brushed by anthocyanins that they seem as if only barely dusted with chalk, and only on close inspection can they be identified as luminatas.

EDGING: The paler edging is also quite variable, ranging from distinct or blended, narrow or wide. Standard edging is normally broader than the edge on the falls. If the anthocyanin color is dark, contrast with the paler edge can be striking. Darker, more solidly colored falls generally have minimal edging, but this is not always the case.

Imagine the prospect of a blackish purple fall with a near-white edge, nicely ripple-ruffled, a big white heart, and tangerine beards. ‘Aladdin’s Wish’ may have been insignificant and unassuming, but I want the works!

Keith Keppel is one of the most respected iris hybridizers in the world, with three Dykes Medals to his credit. Known to many as the plicata man, Keith has a special fondness for plicatas, luminatas, and their relatives. He can be reached at plicataman@earthlink.net. ♣

¹ - BAIS 205, April 1972, pp 19-24: Luminata—Fancy in the Altogether; B. Warbuton, F. Megson, J. Teartington, and J. Witt.

² - BAIS 277, April 1990, pp 21-22: The Luminata Color Pattern; H. Stahly, K. Keppel, and K. Nelson.



Click over to the AIS Blog for the pedigrees of each seedling picture.

Clockwise from top left:

O6-201D; O7-211A; O6-199A; O6-193A; O5-78J

My Favorite Irises

BY JIM HEDGECOCK, MISSOURI

As a long-time grower of spurias and current President of the Spuria Iris Society, Jim Hedgecock knows a thing or two about the best spurias for American gardens. In our regular feature My Favorite Irises, Jim offers up 10 of his top choices in this underappreciated section of beardless irises.

When I was approached about writing this article, I thought to myself, this will be easy. I can tell you, it was not. I joined the Spuria Iris Society in 1995 and went in at the same time as second vice president. I have been in constant contact in one way or another every year since. I also teamed up with Charlie Jenkins and Floyd Wickenkamp in the early 1990s and introduced a number of irises for both of them from that point on. In Charlie's case, we introduced several that I am very partial to. While I grow probably one of the largest collections of spurias in the U.S., I have not grown many of the newer West Coast introductions until two years ago after the last spuria mini-convention. I am growing most of the newer ones now and if asked to do this again, I would add several to that next list.

It was hard to pick out just a few spurias from the pack to spotlight. I could just as easily have picked 30 or 40 more. These picks are all good growers in the Midwest and I am quite sure they would just as good in almost any climate zone. Remember—grow more spurias, you won't be sorry.



'Missouri Autumn' (Niswonger, 1997) is in my opinion the best brown spuria I have ever seen. It has large, excellently formed flowers, and the plant grows like a bad weed.



'Mythical Nights' (Hedgecock, 2009) is one of my first introductions, and I am partial to it because it has such clean, dark navy and blue purple blended flowers. There aren't very many in this color range in spurias.



'Moonless Night' is Joe Ghio's 2010 dark purple-black introduction that we think is probably just about the darkest colored spuria in existence. Superb stalks and great form are the standard to meet in this intro.



'Piper May' is a 2009 Charlie Jenkins introduction that has exploded in popularity. The standards are reddish purple with falls that are bright yellow with stitches and striations of reddish purple over the lower two-thirds of the petals.



'Sonoran Carnival' (1996) is Floyd Wickenkamp's star introduction in our garden. We never have enough of this one. The standards are violet with yellow centers. Falls are orange yellow with brown stripes and narrow violet edges.



'Walk The Line' (Hedgecock, 2009) is a recent introduction of mine. The flowers are ruffled and dark purple with a small medium yellow signals radiating out to white and yellow lines that cover the upper two-thirds of the petals.



'Art and Soul' (1998/99) is an import from Barry Blyth. There is no doubt that this cultivar tops the lists of many spuria lovers. The standards are blue lavender over lemon white. The falls are lemon with long gold signals. Different and very beautiful.



'Elfin Sunshine' (Jenkins, 1998) is one of my favorites because it blooms almost two weeks ahead of the main spuria crowd. This little showoff just captures everyone's heart. The small flowers on short stalks are pale yellow blending to dark yellow.



'Blueberry Sundae' (Niswonger, 2000) is one of Dave Niswonger's best ever spurias in my book. I love this subtle, pale blue blend. It is one of those unique spurias that you won't mix up with others in the garden.



'Missouri Sunset' (Niswonger, 1996) is not just another gold spuria. Dave Niswonger hit the mark when he introduced this one. The flowers have superb substance, and the stalks are perfect. This one of the best growers for us in the garden. ❖

Jim Hedgecock and his wife Lamoyne are proprietors of Comanche Acres Iris Gardens, located outside of Gower, Missouri. He hybridizes tall bearded and spuria irises. He can be reached at jim@comancheacresiris.com.

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Ron Killingsworth, 10329 Caddo Lake Rd, Mooringsport, LA 71060;
<retmiagt@dishmail.net>

Tall Bearded Iris Society:

Hugh Stout, 432 NE 70th St., Oklahoma City, OK 73105;
<stoutgarden@cox.net>

Ramona Howard, P. O. Box 6991, Lubbock, TX 79493;
<rhoward3604@sbcglobal.net>

AIS SECTIONS

(1ST LINE = PRESIDENTS, 2ND LINE = MEMBERSHIPS)

Median Iris Society:

Jean Morris, 682 Huntley Heights Dr., Ballwin, MO 63021;
<morrisje1@aol.com>

Nyla Hughes, 139 Parsons Ave., Webster Groves, MO 63119;
<nyla_h@att.net>

Society for Siberian Irises:

Harold Griffie, Box 315, Biglerville, PA 17307; <hgriffie18@yahoo.com>

Susan Grigg, 105 Trotters Ridge Drive, Raleigh, NC 27614;
<ssimemsec@nc.rr.com>

Spuria Iris Society:

Jim Hedgecock, Route1, Box 258, Gower, MO 64454-8613;
<jim@comancheacresiris.com>

Nancy Price, 32009 S. Ona Way, Molalla, OR 97038-9244;
(503)829-2928; <flags@molalla.net>

Society for Japanese Irises:

Dennis Hager, PO Box 390, Millington, MD 21651; <hager@aredee.com>

Jody Nolin, 5184 CTY RD 20, Rushsylvania OH 43347;
<jody.nolin@gmail.com>

Reblooming Iris Society:

Dana Brown, 1506 S. Aspen Ave., Lubbock, TX 79403;
<ddbrow@sbcglobal.net>

Rose Kinnard, 1649 Madison 504, Fredericktown, MO 63645-8303;
<RKinnard@minesmo.org>; website: www.rebloomingiris.com

Society for Pacific Coast Native Irises:

Debby Cole, 7417 92nd Place SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040; <dcthree@juno.com>

Kathleen Sayce, PO Box 91 Nahcotta WA 98637-0091;
<ksayce@willapabay.org>

Species Iris Group of North America (SIGNA):

Will Plotner, PO Box 250, Molalla, OR 97038-0250; <gardens@molalla.net>

Rodney Barton, 3 Wolters Street, Hickory Creek, TX 75065;
<rbarton@hsc.unt.edu>

Dwarf Iris Society:

Dorothy Willott, 26231 Shaker Blvd., Beachwood, OH 44122-7111;
<dwiris@aol.com>

Dave and Deb Miller, 61 Laconwood Drive, Springfield, Illinois, 62712-8727; (217)529-8014; <Miller42@aol.com>

Historic Iris Preservation Society (HIPS):

Gary White, 701 Old Cheney Rd., Lincoln, NE 68512; <in2iris@yahoo.com>

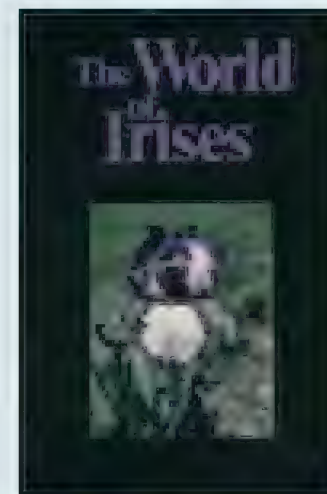
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IF NOT NOTED, CONTACT SECTION FOR OVERSEAS POSTAGE RATES.

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Society for PCNs <i>Paper copies of Almanac</i>	15.00 (<i>overseas</i> 18.00)	40.00 (<i>overseas</i> 48.00)	n/a	n/a
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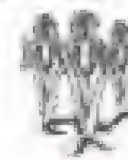
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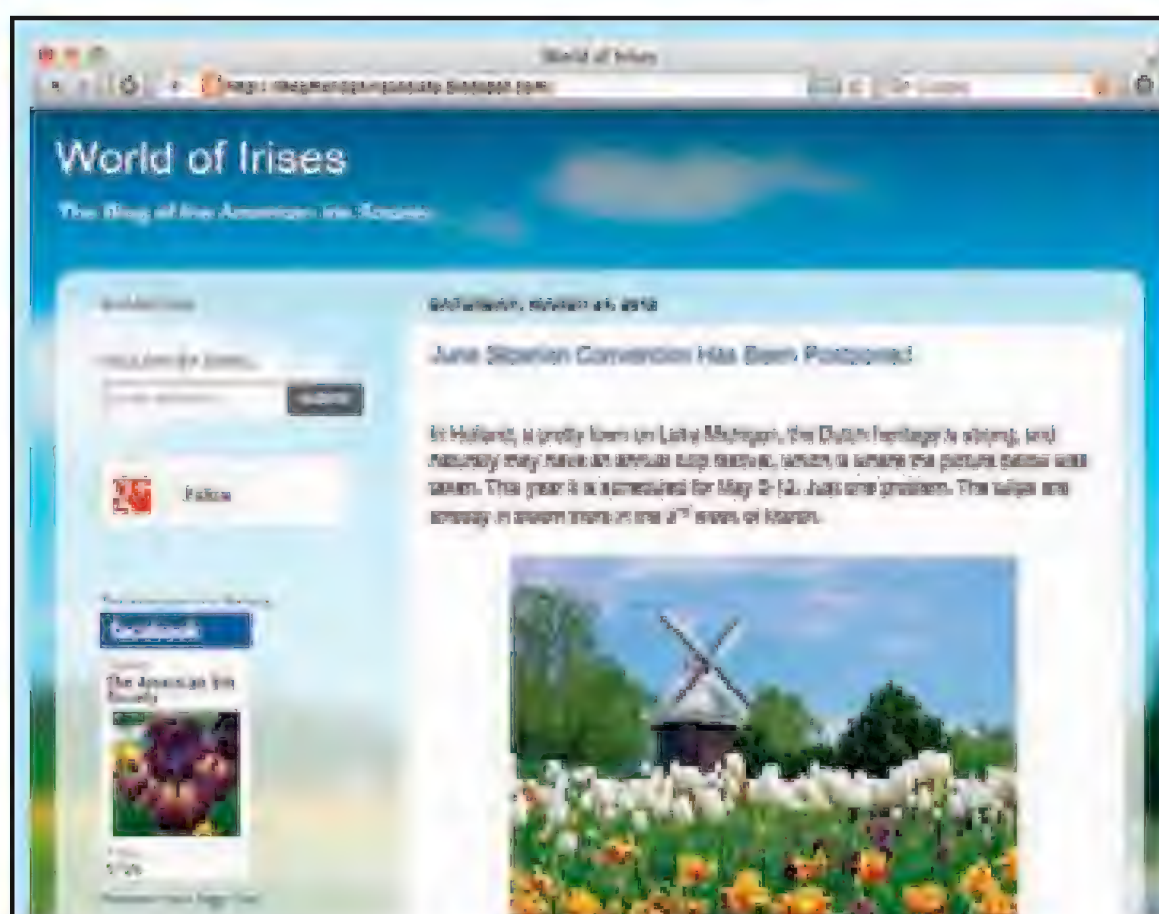


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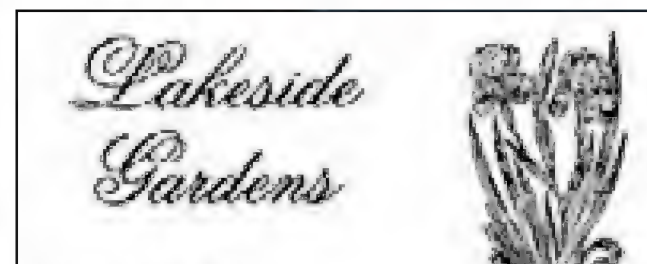
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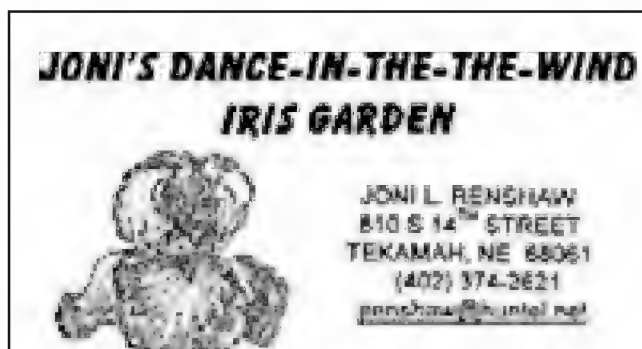


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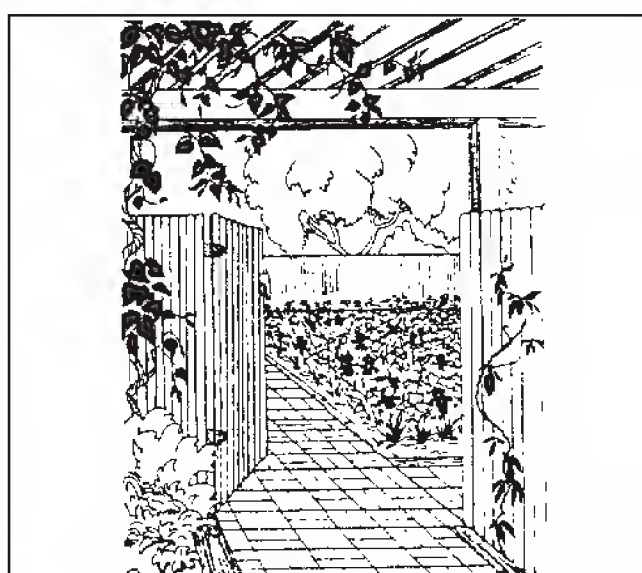
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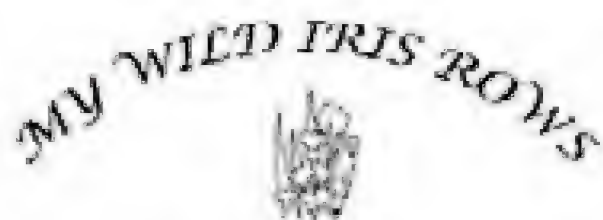
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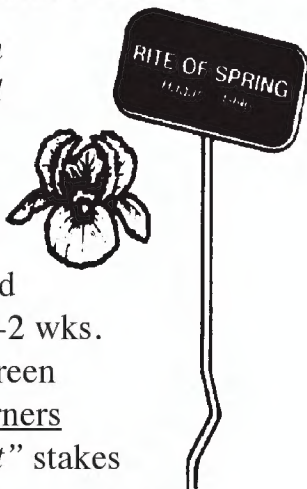
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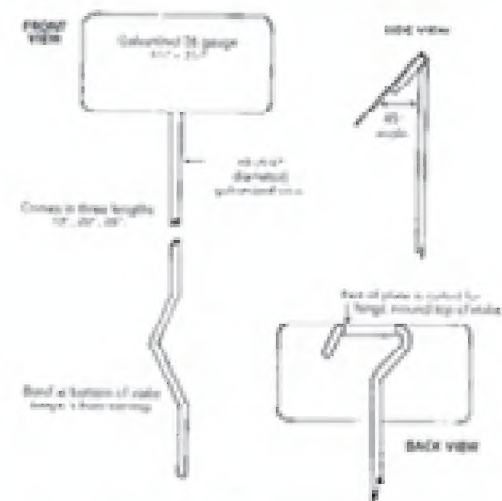
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